The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

JUDITH BARODY

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Words of Advice for New Foreign Service Officers

INTERVIEW

Q: All right, so this is May 4th and we are beginning our first interview with Judith Baroody. We always begin with where were you born and raised.

Growing up in Richmond and Northern Virginia, 1953-1972

BAROODY: I was born in Richmond Virginia, the fourth of five children. All of us currently live in Virginia and we're a close family. I went to Ginter Park Elementary School, which is still actively teaching kids fifty years later, and had the kind of education that sets you up to pursue a lot of different options when you grow up. In the fourth grade, we had to choose between studying French and Spanish.

I chose French, and can still remember the teacher pulling down what looked like a map. It was a picture of a farm with all the animals, and we identified them in French one by one. I remember my fifth-grade teacher, Miss Rose Smith, telling us about her travels in Europe and my sixth-grade teacher, Miss Eleanor DeMerritt, teaching us about the ancient Middle East. I also had the opportunity to learn to play the string bass and was the

president of the orchestra. I hope that kids in public schools are still getting those opportunities – they open up so many new worlds.

For all our differences, my husband and I had similar experiences growing up. We both grew up as the fourth child of the family, studied French and played the string bass beginning in elementary school, and became Middle East specialists working for the federal government.

There was a cultural divide between my mother's family and my father's family and that's among the reasons I had joined the Foreign Service. My father is of Lebanese origin. His father, my grandfather, emigrated from Lebanon in 1895 at the age of 15. Grandpa passed away when I was 12 years old. I didn't realize that he spoke English, because whenever he was in the house he spoke Arabic with my grandmother. My father said later Grandpa was fluent in English, which makes sense since he immigrated at an early age.

My grandfather, Assad Maury Baroody – later Americanized to "Arthur" - had a typical early-20th century immigrant's life, not an easy life. He took whatever job he could. He had a series of little restaurants. He had an ice-cream stand on the sidewalk in Lake City, South Carolina. He did whatever he had to do to survive and put food on the table for his four children and his wife. I remember him sitting in the living room in his chair in the corner, quietly smoking a cigar. My grandmother was the talker.

By the time I came along, they were relatively prosperous, with a restaurant on Lombardy Street in Richmond and a three-story home in the West End filled with carpets from the old country. They sent three sons to college, all to become engineers.

Many years after my grandfather died, my sister-in-law came across the fact that, as a young man, a new immigrant to the United States, he had been awarded patents for a mechanized system of putting bottle caps on milk jars. The patent applications were beautifully drafted.

Q: Just a quick question here: what would make a fifteen-year-old in Lebanon want to go to the United States?

BAROODY: His family was from a part of Lebanon above Beirut in the mountains, a village called Souk el-Gharb, which means "western market" in Arabic. There was conflict in the area. Lebanon, as you know, has a long history of violence, and at that time there was a Christian conflict with Druze community. That was one of the reasons why a lot of people emigrated.

Economic opportunity was another reason. My understanding is that many left Lebanon because of the end of wild silk production. Someone came up with a way of cultivating silkworms, so traditional methods of getting the raw material from trees became obsolete. Silk production had been a source of local employment, and when it ended, young people left in search of jobs.

My grandfather came over with a group of cousins, as immigrants tended to do. We have copies of the entry at Ellis Island when he came over. He went back to Lebanon 20 years later and found a bride, my grandmother Adele Thome.

Across the cultural divide, my mother's side of the family was very different. Mother was a blue-eyed blonde, Elizabeth May Irwin, and her background was English-German. The family Bible with the names and dates of family members - when they were born and when they died - was published in 1803, when Thomas Jefferson was President.

But they were not one of the first families of Virginia, also known as FFVs.
They were carpetbaggers. They came to Virginia from Pennsylvania after the Civil War and built an estate on the James River called "Blythewood" which still exists, in a town called Irwin-on-the-James. They were wealthy enough to have their portraits painted and their silver engraved.

So my last name is Baroody – a recognizably Middle Eastern name – and my first name is Judith – pretty much all-American and popular at the time I was born. My middle name is Raine, a name from my mother's side.

I was named for my great-great uncle, Friedrich Raine. He was German, and he immigrated in the early 1800s to Baltimore. He established and published the longest-lasting German language newspaper in the United States, "Der Deutsche Correspondent." He was a wealthy philanthropist. He helped a lot of Germans immigrate to the Baltimore area by publishing job announcements at no cost - free help-wanted ads in German - that attracted a lot of German people to the area. Almost all of the German-language newspapers in the U.S. went out of business after World War I.

I'm the last one in my immediate family with his name, Raine. The Irwins had been wealthy but lost their fortune at the end of the 1920s.

So there's this cultural divide between the Middle Eastern part of the family – the Baroodys - and the Irwins. It made me interested in going to the Middle East and bridging cultures. There was another kind of divide between my parents. My father is an engineer and a great chess player. My mother was a writer, great with words, the author of seven novels and a couple of hundred magazine articles.

Q: Did your grandmother on your father's side talk a lot about recollections of Lebanon?

BAROODY: My grandmother was the warmest, funniest lady - full of adventure. She did go back to Lebanon two or three times to see her sisters, and she loved to talk. Her family was from Latakia, now part of Syria. She talked about riding a camel north to Aleppo when the region fell into chaos at the end of World War I and hiding in a basement there waiting for her brother to rescue her.

Her English was never perfect. It was a pity because, as she grew older, she never really perfected her English and her Arabic became more and more antiquated. She'd go back to Lebanon to see her sisters and she said that the taxi drivers would laugh at her Arabic because she used old-fashioned expressions that people didn't say anymore. So she always had one foot in one country and one foot in the other but was not firmly at home in either one.

Q: Neither she nor your grandfather convinced any other members of their family to come to the U.S.?

BAROODY: There were some cousins who came over in the original migration in 1895 and through them I'm distantly related to a large Washington family, most of whom are Melkite Catholics. William Baroody Senior, for example, was the founder of the American Enterprise Institute, and William Jr. was the Chief of Public Affairs for the Nixon White House. Michael Baroody was his brother, and he was prominent in the National Association of Manufacturers. There are a lot of Baroodys running around the greater Washington area.

Q: While you were growing up hearing Arabic, did you pick it up?

BAROODY: Sadly, I did not. My father has never been to Lebanon - he was born in the United States. And even though his first language was Arabic until he was four years old, there was a sense when he was growing up (and my father is now 94) that you didn't want to acknowledge that you were an immigrant. You wanted to be 100% American.

So among the first pictures we have of him as a small boy, he was dressed in a cowboy suit, sitting on a pony - just as American as could be. He rejected Arabic. So I didn't learn it growing up, which was too bad because when I came to FSI and started studying Arabic I thought, "Why couldn't I have learned this the easy way?" I wish I had studied Arabic sooner so I could have communicated with my grandmother in her native language.

I learned just enough Arabic before she died so I could write my name. I wrote J-U-D-Y in Arabic, and she said it was wrong. I asked why, and she said I had written a "d" instead of an "l". It seems that, all those years, she thought my name was "Julie."

Q: I assume that your grandparents were Christian, but is that the correct assumption?

BAROODY: That's right. My grandfather's family in Lebanon may have started out Eastern Orthodox, but they had been visited by a persuasive Presbyterian missionary. There are a lot of Baptists and a lot of Presbyterians in Lebanon, as well as Eastern Orthodox and Catholic. But when I was growing up, we followed my mother's side of the family, who were Episcopalian.

Q: Okay, so here you are in Richmond, and you spent your entire youth and adolescence up through high school in Richmond?

BAROODY: No, after my sophomore year at Thomas Jefferson High School in Richmond, we moved to Northern Virginia and I went to Annandale High School for my junior year, then moved again to Springfield and I went to Lee High School for my senior year. We lived on Highland Street, where I had a close neighbor and classmate named Kathy Pauli.

The reason I mention her is because one afternoon we were on the sidewalk in front of our houses. I asked her about her parents, and she said her father was a Foreign Service Officer. I said "what does that mean?"

She said, "He was the Public Affairs Officer in Nicosia, Cyprus, and we went out to the beach and it was so beautiful, and he would travel around the world and do cultural events working at embassies."

That was like a bolt of lightning! "Do people get paid to do that?" I said. I realized that being in the Foreign Service was for me. I thought, "This is what I want to do: I want to live overseas and experience a lot of different cultures. I'd love to live in the Middle East." So I went to the College of William and Mary and majored in Modern Languages.

Q: Just one quick question before we go right on to William and Mary. In high school you learned about the Foreign Service. Were you involved in other kinds of activities in high school that you thought of as kind of helping you develop the skills or the background to get you on the way to an international job?

BAROODY: In retrospect, many of the things I did in high school led the way to a career in the Foreign Service. I was taking French. I was in every club imaginable, being a joiner type of person, and every time I moved to a new high school, I joined another bunch of clubs. So I was on the Mayor's Advisory Council in Richmond, acted in several plays, was in the Model United Nations, wrote for the high school newspaper and was president of the chess club. I was never that great at chess but I think they elected me president because I had the best social skills.

I was a member of the National Honor Society and in my senior year founded a chapter of another honor society, the Quill and Scroll, an honor society for English, for writing. The reason I did it was that the boy that I dated in high school was the president of the National Honor Society. He and I were very competitive.

College of William and Mary, 1972-1975

My parents were so set on my going to William and Mary that they moved to Williamsburg so that I could live at home and go to college. They had been able to put aside only enough money to pay for the first semester's tuition. I don't blame them for not putting aside more money for me to go to college. I was the fourth child and my father never made a big salary as an engineer, but it meant that finding the money to pay

for tuition, books and supplies was never certain. Since it never dawned on me to take a student loan, it meant I worked at a lot of low-paying jobs while I was taking classes.

I ended up hanging out with international students and studied French, Spanish, Italian and German, good preparation for the Foreign Service. Some of the foreign students were from wealthy families – one guy in our circle was from French royalty and another was the son of a flourishing Belgian industrialist.

But for me, getting through William and Mary was a financial struggle. I was working 30 hours a week and taking 18 credit hours of study a semester. I did all kinds of jobs to get through college – I was a campus tour guide, worked in the William and Mary library, waitressed at Howard Johnson's, acted in summer stock, and was a cocktail waitress, first at a Ramada Inn and then at the Williamsburg Inn.

I lost a lot of opportunities to learn at William and Mary because I was working so many hours and staying up so late. I'm the kind of person that needs to go to bed early - I'm an early riser. Being a cocktail waitress was a way to earn a reasonable salary but it meant that I didn't finish my shift until 2:00 a.m. One semester I had this one 8:00 am class in geology. I didn't do well in that class – I was barely awake - and that was a pity, because I love geology.

Q: Let's back up a minute. You say you were in summer stock? As an actress?

BAROODY: Yes, I had a mercifully brief career as an actress during the summer of 1974. I was selected for one of five female speaking roles in a play called "The Common Glory." Maybe because of my waist-length hair, I was chosen to be Martha Jefferson, Thomas's wife, who died young. It was a paid job and they provided housing in one of William and Mary's dormitories for the summer.

I realized early on that one of the other four actresses in the play was better than I could hope to be, so it helped me decide that the theater was not my future. As it happened, the talented actress was Glenn Close. She graduated from William and Mary in June and was starring on Broadway by September. One of the other actors in "The Common Glory" that year was Jonathan Frakes, who went on to portray Commander Riker in "Star Trek: Next Generation." Truly a stellar cast!

Looking back on it, I think William and Mary had a lot to offer, but I was just struggling to get the degree, not to learn. Lots of missed opportunities to learn. Yet I'd like to think that all is forgiven. My husband and I go back to William and Mary fairly often to alumni events and I've lectured and given interviews there about the Foreign Service.

At the end of my sophomore year I said "I'm either going to drop out or I'm going to get my degree in three years." I ended up getting my degree in three years, an August 1975 graduate.

Q: When you entered, was your intention to major in linguistics, or what were you planning?

BAROODY: I really just didn't know. My two strengths were English and French. I had done well on the Advanced Placement tests so I got credit for a year of English and started French at an advanced level. I had no idea what I wanted to do. I graduated and I still had no idea.

I had taken the Foreign Service exam when I was at William and Mary and didn't pass. That was alright, because I was too young to enter anyway. It is worthwhile to take the test even if you're not ready to enter – a good way to prepare for taking it again.

Then I graduated early. I figured, "Well okay, I've got a year when I would have been going to school." I had saved up some money because being a cocktail waitress is lucrative, for a service job, particularly when you're working at a nice place like the Williamsburg Inn. So I set aside some tips and I decided that for the year that I would have spent as a college senior, I was going to travel because that's what I wanted to do. I wanted to see the world.

Backpacking in Europe, 1976-1977

So I traveled in the U.S. and Canada off and on for about six months, continuing to work as a cocktail waitress and bartender at the Inn when I was back at home. I took my first plane ride to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and then drove with a friend back through the U.S., through the rugged emptiness of the northwest and flat lands of Midwest. It gave me a sense of the size and geological diversity of our country.

Then I took off for six months in Europe, traveling alone. This was a rite of passage. I had a Eurail pass, a youth hostel subscription and a backpack. This is what people did back then. I had been planning to travel with another young woman but we realized we weren't compatible so I decided to go it alone. I got on Icelandic Air, got off in Reykjavik and stayed in Iceland for three days, then continued on to Luxembourg. That was the cheapest route and the one many backpackers took.

So I landed in Luxembourg by myself at age 22. I had been on a plane before, but not on a train or a subway. So here I am in Luxembourg and headed to Paris. All I had in the world was my backpack and the clothes on my back. This was in the days before credit cards or cellphones.

The first thing that happened, even before we arrived at the Gare du Nord in Paris, was that someone reached into my backpack and stole all of my documents - my money, my passport, my Eurail pass, my youth hostel pass, my library card, my driver's license. It was my mistake to put them all together in one place. I now ask myself why I brought my library card to begin with.

Fortunately I had tucked some traveler's checks in another place, but I was distraught, as you can imagine. I did have enough sense to realize that the first problem to solve was the passport. I had no place to stay; I couldn't go to the youth hostel because they had stolen my pass. The first thing I did was go to the U.S Embassy. This was the first time I had ever been in one.

I found the U.S. Embassy in Paris and told the American Citizens Services officer that my passport had been stolen, and I got another one right away. You should have seen the picture! I wish I still had that passport photo because my hair was sticking up in all directions and I looked like road kill. But it was interesting to have been introduced to the State Department in that way.

I had only a small amount of money, enough to stay in Europe for maybe a month. I decided the first thing I was going to do was get out of Paris. It was too big and I didn't know where to stay. I wasn't used to being in big cities. So I decided to take a train due south to a town called Bourges.

But before I did, I took a look at my "Let's Go Europe" book. It said that in Paris there was an office called "Bureau for Lost Objects in the Subway." So I decided, okay, I'm supposed to catch this train to Bourges, but first I'm going to this office just in case. It was a few minutes before five o'clock, and they closed at 5:00.

I went in. I had no expectations and thought, they're going to kick me out because it's almost closing time. I gave them my name, said that I'd lost my stuff, and to my surprise the person behind the counters perked up. She went back to a file cabinet and pulled out my passport case. Everything was in there except for my passport.

Q: Wow, this is amazing!

BAROODY: Apparently all that the person who had lifted it out of my backpack wanted was the passport. I was so lucky in that sense. I was also lucky that some kind person must have found it on the floor of the Gare du Nord and given it to a policeman who took the initiative to send it to this Bureau.

That was my first experience with an embassy and my first experience of being alone in a foreign country. After navigating through that catastrophe, I was okay. I got all my stuff back - all the money, my plane ticket home, train pass - everything was there except for the passport. So I was good to go.

I used the Eurail pass to take the train to Bourges, a quiet little town in the exact center of France. Being in that serene place gave me time to collect my thoughts, breathe deeply and regroup. Then I continued my journey and traveled for six months.

I counted up that I went to 18 countries, but that included small ones like Andorra and Monaco. I got as far south as Greece and as far north as the tip of northern Scotland. I

would hook up with other back-packers for a day or a week; the longest I accompanied anyone was a couple of weeks with three Scottish girls. Then I'd be on my way.

I traveled and lived for six months in Europe for $5,000, so you know I wasn't exactly sitting at the Ritz. I look back now and there's no way I would take those risks. It's a different world and I'm a different person - more risk-averse than I was then.

I was sleeping on trains, a very bad idea for a young woman traveling alone. I slept in a field in York, England when there was no place else to stay, the only time I had to sleep outdoors. A dog came up and sniffed my sleeping bag in the middle of the night. And I stayed in some truly vile youth hostels. But I generally used common sense, and the travel made me stronger and more confident.

Q: What impression overall did it leave with you? Was there something that really kind of impressed you? There are so many five star attractions obviously, but to go through eighteen countries! How did that leave you just in terms of your take on the world, your general perception?

BAROODY: The last place I went - and the farthest south - was Greece, and as soon as I got there I thought: "I am home." One of the things that I knew right away was how much I loved the Mediterranean. Of all the places I went, that was the one where I felt the most relaxed, the most at home, and that I wanted to go back to before any others.

I also learned that being a tourist is hard work if you're serious about it, and I was. I treated this trip as if it were graduate school, so I worked to see and study all the major attractions and cultural highlights. You realize that, as the Seals and Crofts song goes: "we may never pass this way again," so it's a good idea to focus and spend your time wisely when you're exploring new places. I went to countries in which it was literally true that you could never go there again, such as Yugoslavia, and I'm grateful that I went when I did.

Traveling alone, I came away with more self-confidence. I could read a map; I could take care of myself; I could make decisions and I loved the freedom.
I didn't have to make any compromises; I could just get up in the morning, go to the train station and decide, "Oh, I think I'll go to Germany today."

I remember going to Sarajevo - this was 1976 - and I was so impressed with the fact that it was a multi-ethnic city that was doing so well. I drank water out of the fountain in the middle of the city and got terribly sick – not my best idea. But it was such a pity that this city, which was considered an exemplar of multi-ethnic co-existence, later devolved into such violence.

My impression was that this "gap-year" travel was liberating. It's like when people go into the military and they come out more disciplined and confident. They have a clearer sense of where they're going. That's what this odyssey was for me.

Q: A lot of travel writers say they prefer traveling alone, not only in that they don't have to make any compromises with travel companions, but also because it's their perceptions, and their perceptions are not in any way changed by those of other people. So you know you took what you wanted from that trip and it was entirely yours. It says something about you. There are a lot of people in life who never own a passport.

BAROODY: There are people who think that traveling, going to Europe or elsewhere, is not for them: "Oh, I'm not that kind of person." Somehow they think it's an entitlement. They build themselves behind some kind of wall.

Traveling in the U.S., Canada and Europe at that early age broke down that psychological barrier and reinforced my desire to work overseas. When I came back to the U.S., I realized that I had to get serious about figuring out what I wanted to do with my life. I moved back in with my parents in Williamsburg and went back to cocktail waitressing at the Williamsburg Inn.

Broadcast Journalist, ABC-TV Affiliate 1977-1983

One day it dawned on me that I wanted to be a television reporter. Since I hadn't passed the Foreign Service exam, I decided I wanted to become a foreign correspondent for a major network. In the mid-70s - before CNN, before cable TV - the big networks, ABC, CBS and NBC, had correspondents stationed overseas in the major cities. That's what I decided I wanted to do.

So I quit my job as a cocktail waitress and devoted myself to getting a job as a television correspondent, which was a ridiculous thing to do given my lack of experience and credentials. At the end of five months of job-hunting I also realized I had to restrict myself because I really didn't want to leave Virginia. My parents and sisters and brothers were in Virginia; I really didn't want to live in St. Louis or Dubuque.

I applied to every single television station in the state. I finally ended up in Norfolk. I went to the CBS affiliate station there and the news director was a very nice guy. He said, "Look, you have no education in journalism. You've never been a journalist. If you really want to do this, you ought to get a Master's degree in journalism, and the best place in the country for television journalism is at the University of Missouri. They've got a great graduate program in television journalism, the best." So I applied.

Q: What year is this? That would be 1977. All right, so the year after you returned from Europe you started job-hunting to be a TV reporter.

BAROODY: That's right. The same week that I received a letter saying "You've been accepted into the University of Missouri graduate program" I got a job offer from the ABC affiliate in Norfolk, the competitor. So I thought, "Okay. On-the-job training and earning a salary versus going to graduate school and paying tuition?" It was a pretty easy decision. It's gratifying that the news director at the CBS affiliate that did *not* hire me later said that was one of the worst mistakes he ever made.

So I went to work for the ABC affiliate, WVEC-TV in Norfolk. I was a reporter, anchor and documentary producer there for six and a half years, and I won awards from The Virginia Associated Press Broadcasters, the National Association for Working Women, and a silver medal from the New York Film Festival. I had the chance to cover some great stories such as interviewing the legendary actor John Wayne and driving into blustery Nor'easters in the Outer Banks of North Carolina.

The news director, Tony Burden, gave me an amazing amount of autonomy, especially considering my lack of experience and the fact that I started at age 23. We had a potential audience of over a million viewers in the Hampton Roads-Tidewater area. When I became weekend anchor, my responsibilities were to assign stories, supervise the reporter-photographer crews, write and time the newscast, and anchor the broadcast. No one edited my copy or otherwise told me what to do.

As a reporter, I was also given the liberty of selecting stories to work on that interested me. One of the documentaries I won awards for concerned the incidence and fatality rates of certain types of cancer among different ethnic groups. The news director authorized me and a videographer to do interviews at Harlem Hospital in New York. What a hassle it was getting a cab to go there from Manhattan! I did another series on the legal problems confronting farm wives in Virginia, such as social security and inheritance issues. It was later used as part of a successful lobbying effort to change intestacy laws in the state.

I enjoyed working as a reporter. As time went on, after I became the weekend anchor, I became locally famous. That has its ups and downs. I'd go into the 7-11 in my sweatsuit and no makeup, and it's "Oh, you're Judith Baroody!" I realized that being publicly known was not all it was cracked up to be, even at a local level. There's a quote from the actor Bill Murray: "I always want to say to people who want to be rich and famous: 'try being rich first.' See if that doesn't cover most of it."

Even as a local reporter, I was able to cover aspects of international affairs. When the U.S. Embassy in Tehran was seized on November 4, 1979 and Iranian students took more than 50 American diplomats hostage, I went to Norfolk State University to interview Iranian students there about the crisis. They had been sent for an American education by the Shah's regime, but several were on the side of the Islamic revolutionaries.

I also went to the Soviet Union on a tourist trip organized by a consortium of Virginia universities at the end of 1982. It was quite a bargain – we visited Moscow, Leningrad, Tbilisi, Samarkand and Tajikistan, stayed in the best hotels and had private tours of the great museums. It was clearly a propaganda tour, but an informative one, and I wrote about the experience in a lengthy feature article for the local newspaper, *The Virginian Pilot*.

As a side note, on my first Foreign Service assignment, as I was entering the U.S. Embassy in Damascus, the Marine on duty said, “Hey, there’s Judith Baroody!” He was from Norfolk.

But I kept in mind that what I really wanted was to be a foreign correspondent. I was in my early twenties when I started, but as time went on, I got closer to thirty but no closer to a job at a major network. At that time they wanted young faces. Even as late as the early 1980s, some of the dinosaurs in the news business were saying “there’s no room for broads in broadcasting,” much less older women. So I was applying to the networks, trying to move up the chain, but I wasn't really getting anywhere.

The salary was lousy and there was no job security in local news, but I was doing well in terms of having free rein and winning awards, and the psychic salary was spectacular. I remember walking through a blizzard to get to work because I loved my job at Channel 13 and the show had to go on. You can't have dead air time and it is a vital public service to keep people informed, especially when they need it the most, such as during severe weather.

Being a reporter of local news is excellent preparation for the Foreign Service. The job requires you to assess an issue, synthesize it, and report it in words that people can easily understand – which is what reporting back to Washington about events at your post is all about. In local news, you learn American civics in ways you can’t in school, by observing meetings of city councils, regional planning authorities, reporting on the Virginia General Assembly (and before you scoff at the provincialism, it is the oldest continuous law-making body in the U.S.)

As a local reporter, I learned about the status of crops, beach erosion, and some of the wondrous ways in which quiet citizens live their lives, such as the elderly couple whose job was to take care of an island populated entirely by egrets.

So I loved journalism but I wasn't getting any closer to my goal, which was going overseas. I took the Foreign Service exam again and I passed all parts of it. I got on the register but was not hired.

So at the end of six and a half years at WVEC-TV, I faced the fact that I wasn't getting where I wanted to go. I thought “All right, I'm just going to take a step back,” – “reculer pour mieux sauter” as they say in France - took leave without pay and went to the University of Virginia for a Master's degree in Foreign Affairs.

Graduate School at the University of Virginia, Joining USIA, 1983-1984

I'd always wanted to go to the University of Virginia and it was a fantastic year. It was very different from my William and Mary experience because I had saved enough money so I was able to devote myself to academics. UVA did give me a Research Assistant job, working for Professor of Politics James Ceaser, and that helped financially. Another big

difference was that being a reporter for almost seven years had instilled the discipline to research thoroughly and meet deadlines needed for a successful academic career.

During that year at UVA, I took the Foreign Service exam for the third time and was hired even before I got the test results back. I was immersed in thinking about foreign affairs that year and more mature at that point, so I did well on the oral exam. I immediately accepted the offer and joined the Foreign Service before completing my Master's degree. I gave notice to WVEC-TV and never looked back.

Q: So you did not complete the Masters?

BAROODY: I did. I got into the Foreign Service in June of 1984 and I got my Master's degree in May of 1985. I had completed all the coursework; all I had to do was write the thesis. My thesis advisor, Dr. Alan Cafruny, was so kind that he drove to Washington to consult with me so I could finish my thesis and complete the program.

Junior Officer Trainee (JOT) at USIA, 1984

Q: So you entered in USIA?

BAROODY: I was probably offered the job at USIA (the United States Information Agency, the public diplomacy branch of the U.S. foreign affairs community) because I had been a journalist. That really did suit my interests. I looked forward to exploring new cultures and languages and living in a new environment, but especially to providing my experience and talent to serving our country.

USIA offered in-depth training for new Foreign Service Officers. We had four months of general training before we even started language classes. Then when we went overseas to work at the embassies, we had another long period of diplomatic training before we focused on our specific track.

I was sworn into the Foreign Service by Charles Z. Wick at USIA on June 11, 1984, swearing an oath of allegiance to the Constitution. I remember the day; I kept the pictures. My parents came up from Williamsburg for the swearing in, a long drive for them. I've always been grateful for that.

There were 20 people in my cohort, my class. We weren't called an "A-100 class," as they called the new FSO groups at the State Department, but we were a cohesive group. The FSOs who entered USIA with me are still in touch all these 32 years later. Two people in the group did not get tenure and one left early to return to private industry, but most had successful Foreign Service careers.

We were given a bid list with 30 different countries, all public diplomacy jobs, and told to list our top five preferences. There were 30 posts and 20 people. My number one choice was Damascus, Syria. For everyone else, Damascus was number 30. So I got my number one choice and I think everybody else was relieved they didn't have to go there.

Here's a lesson for incoming Foreign Service Officers. Someone once told me that you have to look out for yourself because no one else will do it for you – not nice, but true. A demonstration of that early in my career was that I entered the Foreign Service at the very bottom of the pay scale, an FS-06, step 1. I might have been appalled by the meager paycheck if I hadn't been so poorly paid for years as a reporter.

After a couple of months, though, talking to other new officers, I began to think it wasn't fair that I came in at the bottom. After all, I had been working in a related profession for almost seven years and completed a year of graduate study. On a break from my Arabic class, I took an elevator up four flights to the office in State Annex 15 that handled such matters. I pleaded my case, and within two minutes, the person in charge agreed, bumped me up in rank to an FS-04 and authorized back pay. This experience tracks with two of my favorite mottos: "You have to ask" and "you can't win if you don't play."

I started Arabic at FSI (the Foreign Service Institute), which at the time was located in Rosslyn. I had the foresight to buy a condo within walking distance. Another word of advice to new FSOs – it's a good idea to invest in real estate early in your career. When you're posted overseas, your tenants pay your mortgage. In any case, I would be bopping down Wilson Boulevard from my condo to class with my headphones and Sony Walkman, listening to Arabic tapes.

We went to "Area Studies" once a week. We would get together with all of the other students who were studying Semitic languages and would talk about the region - politics, culture, society, economy. It was supervised by Peter Bechtold and Bernard Reich, who was a professor at George Washington University and became a good friend.

There was a U-shaped table in this room; students of Arabic were on one side and students of Hebrew were on the other. I almost always slipped in a little late and sat near the door on the Arabic student side because I had been trundling along Wilson listening to my tapes.

As it happened, on the Hebrew-language side of the U there was this guy, a Hebrew student. Area Studies met once a week. As the weeks went on, this guy kept changing his seat. He started on the opposite side, then he'd move six places down, and the next week he moved six more. Finally he ended up on the Arabic students' side of the table, sitting next to me, and he asked me out.

Well, I was not interested in him because he was obviously a heartbreaker, a good-looking military guy, Air Force. So I said no. But he was persistent, and after a few more invitations to dinner, I finally said yes. We went out on our first date on November 9, 1984.

Q: So your training class was with State Department officers or only USIA?

BAROODY: For Area Studies, there were Foreign Service officers from State and USIA, and officers on detail from the Defense Department. There may have been people from USAID.

Anyway, this guy was with the Air Force and he was going off to be the Assistant Air Attaché in the Defense Attaché's Office in Tel Aviv. I was going to be the Assistant Information Officer in Damascus. Nonetheless, he was persistent.

We started dating in December and by June, we were engaged. Then we faced the dilemma - I was going to Damascus and he was going to Tel Aviv and we were engaged to be married. We decided to put off our wedding for a year.

Once we got to our respective posts, communication was problematic. This was before Internet. People tend to forget these things, but 1984 was before the Internet was widely available. It was before personal computers. Also, because the two countries, Israel and Syria, were technically at war with each other, there was no phone service between them. Any letters we mailed to each other went to Germany and then back. So it was hard for us to correspond during the year that we were engaged.

The only way we were able to get together and see each other and plan the wedding was to meet in third countries. We met in Greece and we met in Cyprus three times; we met in Jordan. I traveled to Tel Aviv for Christmas, using a circuitous route so Syrian authorities wouldn't know.

Assistant Information Officer in Damascus, 1985-1986

Q: Okay, it's May 12th and we're starting our second session with Judith Baroody where we left off, following her to her tour in Syria. And the years that you were in Syria for this tour were 1985 to 1986. So why don't we begin. Which position did you take there?

BAROODY: I was working for the United States Information Agency as a public diplomacy officer. This was my first tour of duty, so in the beginning there was a lot of training.

USIA was generous with its training. New officers were given at least two weeks, if not more, in each part of the embassy to learn the work of different sections through hands-on experience. That was my first job - getting acclimated as a Junior Officer in Training, or JOT as we were called then - to working in an embassy. My job title was Assistant Information Officer (AIO) in the Public Affairs office.

That was an interesting choice because there was no Information Officer to assist. The Government of Syria did not permit U.S. diplomats to communicate directly with the Syrian media. The reporters weren't allowed to talk to us and we weren't authorized to do press conferences.

Just to set the scene, I arrived August 3rd, 1985. I had just graduated from the University of Virginia with a Master's degree in Foreign Affairs in May of '85 and in June had gotten engaged to be married. So there was a lot going on in my life, and this was my first tour of duty overseas. For the first month I was at post, the temperature was over 100 degrees every day; I came close to passing out from the heat a couple of times.

The leader of Syria was Hafez al-Asad, the father of the current president, who had been in power since 1970. It was the longest period of political stability in Syria since the end of the Ottoman Empire. Hafez al-Asad used strongman tactics to keep the Syrian population under control. But there was stability and a relative amount of religious tolerance because the Asad family were Alawites, a splinter group of Shia Islam. A Christian community was able to operate openly and there was a small Jewish community. Many Syrian Jews left in 1992 when emigration was officially allowed.

There seemed to be a degree of increasing prosperity for the general population. There was electrification and infrastructure development of the rural areas. The leadership was beginning to bring people living in the rural areas into the 20th century. At the same time, they used strong-armed techniques to keep people in line through the pervasive presence of the *Mukhabarat,* the secret police.

We could not meet with any professional journalists because in essence they were all servants of the regime and our contact would put them in peril. It was dangerous for them. It was dangerous for any private citizens to meet with American diplomats because secret police were watching. There was also a pervasive Soviet presence in Syria.

Q: On the Soviet presence, was it principally military or were they active in other sectors as well?

BAROODY: They were active in many sectors. The Soviets had a strong connection with Syrian centers of influence and power.

I completed the training at the Embassy. The work I did as a temporary staffer in other sections of the Embassy was surprisingly substantive. For example, I worked for a couple of weeks in the General Services Office, in GSO. One of the things I did was to find a way to save a considerable amount of money on the fuel that the embassy used. It was called Mazut. It has a distinctive odor which I still recall. In the Personnel division, I spent a couple of weeks learning to write Position Descriptions, a skill which came in handy throughout my career.

Staffing the visa line in the Consular office was not my favorite two weeks. By nature, I'm an empathetic person and that's why Public Diplomacy was a good career choice for me. Consular work was not a good fit. By my fourth day at the Non-Immigrant Visa window, the line in front of my window was twice as long as the one next to me. I had a headache by eleven o'clock every morning because it was such a conflict: do I believe the people applying for tourist visas? Do I not believe them? I realized I was not cut out to be a Consular Officer but gained a lot of respect for my colleagues who choose this track.

Then I worked in the political section, looking at the news media, interpreting what was being said, then sending the information in cables to Washington. That would also be a big part of my job as Assistant Information Officer.

One of the first incidents that I was involved with was the Achille Lauro affair. That took place in October 1985, not long after I arrived. Leon Klinghoffer and his wife Marilyn had been celebrating their 36th anniversary on a cruise. Four hijackers from the Palestine Liberation Front took control of the ship off of the coast of Egypt between Alexandria and Port Said and demanded to go to Tartus in Syria. They also demanded the release of 50 Palestinians who were in Israeli prisons.

When that didn't happen, they shot Mr. Klinghoffer, who was in a wheelchair. They forced some passengers to throw the wheelchair overboard with Mr. Klinghoffer in it. His body was found October 14th off the coast of Syria.

My job was to stay on the phone line between the embassy in Damascus and the State Department in Washington. As part of the emergency task force at the embassy, my job was to keep the line open so that we could report events immediately. It wasn't always easy to get a line through to Washington.

We knew that the line was monitored. I was on that phone for several hours. We knew the Syrians were listening, but that was to be expected. I would sometimes have to say some words into the line to keep the call going, not to be shut off. I remember one time I must have said something in French and a voice on the other end – or, shall we say, in the middle – said, “Speak English!”

Of course, if there was any kind of major international event like that, everybody in the embassy would be pulled in. Fortunately, there were not too many crises during the time I was in Damascus. There were periods of quiet punctuated by small crises. In addition to the Klinghoffer event, in October 1985 the Israelis bombed PLO headquarters in Tunis. Every time there was any kind of incident that involved Israel, Libya or the Palestinians, there would be reverberations within Syria.

One landmark in my professional life that year was that I had a chance to finally move from the typewriter to - very exciting! - a Victor 9000 computer. I think they have long gone out of business or been sold to another company, but the reason that the State Department invested in Victors at that time was that it was one of the first computer companies with Arabic-language software. It was a giant leap forward, moving from FORTRAN and COBAL to a real computer.

In terms of my day-to-day work, one of the main things we did was to show video tapes, video cassettes in the American Cultural Center. The fact that the U.S. even had an American Cultural Center in that political environment was remarkable. We had members. And even though they may have felt intimidated just walking through the front

door - no doubt half of the people at the Center were secret police spying on the other half – we had well-attended programs.

We offered a film series, showing movies such as "Close Encounters of the Third Kind." A patron once told me was "we really prefer movies that are in color," so we did our best to get newer films rather than the old classics. We showed five films a week, and they were pretty well subscribed. We also offered American magazines and newspapers. Access to information was important.

Q: What other kind of work requirements did you have as the Assistant Information Officer?

BAROODY: Among the things that I did on a day-to-day basis was the media review. Working with a Foreign Service National (FSN), now known as Locally Employed Staff (LES), our press specialist, we got an overview of what Syrian newspapers published about our U.S. policies, wrote up a report and sent it back by cable to Washington.

I also worked on creating our contact list. It was called DRS – Direct Record System. We didn't have a DRS, so I helped set it up, working with a Foreign Service National. At some posts these contact and distribution systems were very elaborate, and of course it's all computerized now, but we were relying on three by five cards in Damascus.

We starting using the new DRS system to send publications to our contacts such as the Wireless File, a compendium of news that USIA published every day. We sent out magazines such as *Al Majal*, which was published by USIA in Arabic.

I also coordinated with university officials when I could, and supported the English Language Center. We didn't teach English at the American Cultural Center, but supported a private company that did by bringing in English teaching specialists to help with curriculum development.

We offered some cultural programs. We had a lot of speakers who came through Syria. They would talk about things that were not politically sensitive and were well-received. For example, we had a doctor who talked about new treatments for arthritis, and that was very successful. A number of experts gave presentations about scientific matters. You could talk to people about these things because they were objective topics, not politically charged. Health and science were popular subjects.

We brought performing groups to Syria as well. In February 1986, we brought over some Break Dancers to perform and demonstrate what was happening in American popular culture. The group was from the Bronx. These dancers were called "Magnificent Force" and they were extremely popular. Young Syrians were practically breaking down the doors to get in to see these shows.

Q: And this in spite of the fact that the regime officially said no contact with Americans…

BAROODY: If Syrian authorities approved these people entering the country, that meant we could have these performances. The “Magnificent Force” dancers were not classical musicians, they were kids from the streets. I have to give the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs credit for staying current with American trends and reaching out to youth.

Another big event was a performing group called “Red Steagall and the Coleman County Cowboys,” a Western Swing band. These guys all piled out of the plane, and there were six of them all over six feet tall with big cowboy hats and the boots. They played Western Swing music and were wildly popular, like the Break Dancers.

I was their escort and driver, and we went all over Syria. I was driving the guys around, first to Latakia then to Homs, where they performed at the Arab cultural center. We took them on a tour of Palmyra, then they concluded their performances in Damascus. Once again, people almost broke down the doors to get in - very successful.

Q: It sounds as if you were able to move around the country easily, without security concerns, despite the fact that the U.S. and Syria had serious policy differences.

BAROODY: Syria was generally stable during the year I was posted there, but things could get contentious. On March 26 there was a confrontation between the United States and Libya in the Gulf of Sidra. Qaddafi had declared that the entire Gulf of Sidra was Libya's province. The United States was not happy with Libya to begin with, so the Navy deployed the USS Ticonderoga aircraft carrier as well as two destroyers, and they crossed what Qaddafi had declared to be his “line of death,” which was 62 nautical miles from the coast.

This carrier group was met by Libyan patrol boats. They launched missiles and there was an exchange of fire. Thirty-five Libyans were killed, no Americans. There was a substantial Libyan presence in Syria.

So the next day the embassy was closed. We were told to stay home. There were anti-American demonstrations in Damascus. The fear was that the demonstrators were going to march from some meeting point downtown to the U.S. Embassy and maybe set it on fire, who knows what. There were walls around the embassy but very little setback. It wasn't well protected.

But President Asad’s Praetorian Guard surrounded the embassy with their guns held out. The Libyans got about half the way and stopped, so there was never really any danger to the U.S. Embassy. That was the only time that the embassy was closed during the time I was there because of the threat of some kind of action on the part of the Syrians or other members of the local population.

Another thing that happened just before I left related to the U.S. bombing of Tripoli. This was Operation El Dorado Canyon, and it was in retaliation for the 1986 Berlin disco bombing by Libya. There were no demonstrations this time, but there was always tension,

whether it was sparked by something Libya did, or something that happened in Lebanon, or something that happened in Israel. We were always on the edge of some kind of confrontation.

As part of my work requirements, I was asked to come up with a big project, and so I decided to write a research paper, a study of Soviet penetration of the Syrian media. I had just completed my Masters of Arts in Foreign Affairs, so I had the research skills. I did a content analysis of four Syrian daily newspapers, *Tishrin*, *Al-Baath*, *Al Thawra* and *The Syria Times* over six weeks and calculated the percentage of articles that came from Soviet media, sources or press services such as Novosti and Tass.

I put those statistics together and noted a few other facts. It was quite long. I sent it the day before I left Damascus as an unclassified cable to Washington. It was very well received. I heard later that folks at State were saying what a great "think piece" it was and asking who in the political section had written it.

Q: Apart from work, how was life at the embassy? Was it a collegial group?

BAROODY: Syria was what was called a "sleeper post," an embassy many would expect to be a difficult or unpleasant place to work but that turned out to be a rich, enjoyable experience. Certainly there were a lot of negatives to serving in Damascus, but morale was high.

Q: How large a post was it roughly in terms of US diplomats?

I would say it was a small to medium-sized embassy. The people who served there with me were NEA (Bureau of the Near East and South Asia) stars, and in later years they rose to the top.

Ambassador Bill Eagleton was well-known in NEA. He had served all over the region with great language skills and a delightful sense of humor. He once said the secret to success in the Foreign Service was just sticking around long enough. He loved the Middle Eastern culture. He was an expert on Kurdish carpets, on carpets in general but particularly Kurdish carpets, so much so that he wrote a book about it.

One of the things I particularly admired about Ambassador Eagleton was that he was taking guitar lessons there in Damascus, demonstrating a love of lifelong learning. He was from Peoria, the Midwest, and just had this curiosity about life. It translated into being a warm person, knowledgeable, someone who loved life in the Foreign Service.

Other officers there included David and Gretchen Welch. Gretchen went on to a distinguished career in management, and David had a great career as an ambassador. We also had Marjorie and David Ransom. David became ambassador to Bahrain. Marjorie is a legendary USIA officer and an expert on Yemeni jewelry. You can find her book about it at the Smithsonian. Marjorie and David took me under their wing, inviting me to dinner

with their daughters occasionally and letting me go with them on excursions in Syria. As I was leaving, Marjorie hosted an engagement/farewell party for me.

The first Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) that I worked for was April Glaspie. It was for a brief period of time; she left not long after I arrived. I remember her being impatient. I got to be friends with her secretary, Sue Kamerick, and she said April was so impatient that she would be dictating, and Sue would be typing up a cable on the typewriter, and April would come along and rip it out of the typewriter and read it to make sure that it was the way she wanted. Then Sue had to very carefully line it up in the typewriter in exactly the right place. Because of the way those cables were read by communications machines, if letters were even slightly off it would cause failure of transmission. So I think that, although we all admired April, Sue was relieved when she left Damascus.

Q: How about when you left the embassy? Did you enjoy living in Syria?

BAROODY: I did. For an American diplomat, there was a positive and a negative aspect to the fact that things were stable, but that the secret police were everywhere. The negative point was the atrocious human rights situation for Syrian citizens. Anybody could get a knock on their door in the middle of the night and their teenage son would be taken away, never to be seen again.

For me personally, the omnipresence of security forces was an advantage: I felt safe. It was like being a game animal who was out of season. It could very quickly have turned the other way.

But as it was, I didn't have to lock the door of my apartment. I had my own secret policeman who stood in front of my building at all times. It was a nice apartment, next to the Shami hospital and just up the hill from the Sheraton Hotel, which was the most prestigious public place in Damascus at the time. My apartment was about two blocks away from President Asad's presidential palace. It was a good neighborhood. I could have left my apartment door open and not worried about burglars.

I felt sorry for the security guy who kept watch on my apartment because it must have been a boring job. First of all, I wasn't going to do anything particularly interesting. Then he had to stand there even when I was at work, so the only thing he had to look at was my cat, who sat in the window. The cat would look at the guy, the guy would look at the cat. You know that must have been a boring job.

Q: C*ould you walk around the city? I'm sure that they restricted you as a diplomat from traveling, but were you at least able to walk around Damascus?*

BAROODY: There were no travel restrictions; we drove all over the country, and I was able to walk around Damascus, a fascinating place. Damascus is the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world. For those who loved archeology and ancient history, it was a privilege to live there. It was an oasis built along the banks of the Barada River, so the Greeks, Romans, Byzantine, Jewish, Islamic and Ottoman cultures all left their mark over

the centuries. Damascus dates from three thousand years B.C. and is mentioned in the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Syrian countryside is dotted with “tells”, mounds that indicate the presence of an archeological site that hasn't been excavated.

There were good points and bad to living in Syria. One negative was frequent electrical outages; we went without electricity at least four hours a day. You lit candles, you didn't watch TV. It was just something you got used to. Another issue was the sanitary processing of food. Syria had the highest per capita rate of giardiasis in the world and the largest percentage of gastroenterologists among their medical professionals. There were problems with flu and viruses. I was exposed to tuberculosis and had to take drugs for six months to fight it off. It was not a healthy place to live.

Socially, because we didn’t have access to Syrian friends, we ended up either socializing with other Americans or with third country nationals. I had good friends who were British; one of my best friends was German, there were Danish, Irish. The diplomatic community did a lot of things together – dinners, the Hash House Harriers, known as “a drinking group with a running problem.”

There was also the American Women's Club of Damascus. We did things with the British Council and the Goethe Institute, and there were a lot of events at the Marine House. I ended up joining the Anglican Church in Damascus. The service was held at the Dar es Salaam School, officiated by the Reverend Peter Crooks. It was quite a vigorous congregation.

Yet it was frustrating, being restricted from socializing with Syrians. Our job, on duty and off, was to help host country nationals understand more about the United States - its society, values and way of life. At all the posts I've served in, other than Baghdad, I was able to socialize with the local people who lived there, and I’ve remained friends with many of them.

Q: Were the Syrian women required to cover their heads?

BAROODY: No, although some chose to do so. It was relatively liberal at that time in Syria. You didn't see a lot of women wearing burkas or hijabs. Syria was more secular.

Talking about how Syrian women dressed makes me think about the Marine Ball. Every embassy has a Marine Ball, and this was my first. I put on a cocktail dress and tried to look nice, but I was nothing compared to the Syrians. The local women were beautiful. They had gotten their hair done and their makeup, and they were stunning.

I remember a comment from one of these gorgeous Syrian women. There were four sisters from the same family, the Azem family. They all worked at the Embassy. Their grandfather had been the last Pasha of Damascus, the Governor under the Ottoman Empire, and his palace is now a museum.

I remember a comment one of the Azem sisters made at the ball. They were looking like a million bucks and I was looking just okay. One of them glanced at me and said, "The difference between you and us - we are Foreign Service Nationals; you're an officer - the difference is that your grandparents immigrated and ours did not."

I don't think she meant that in a snarky way. It doesn't matter, because it was true. My grandparents, of modest means, emigrated from Lebanon, which at the time was part of Greater Syria. Two generations later, I was in charge.

It made me more sensitive to the fact that there should never be an "Upstairs-Downstairs" dimension between officers and Foreign Service Nationals. They usually know more about the country in which you're serving, and the language, than you ever will. They're the people that you should trust and certainly respect.

Q: Did you do much personal travel? Did you get to see any of the already excavated ancient sites or other places where artifacts are kept all over the country?

BAROODY: It was safe to travel all over the country so of course we went to the Krak des Chevaliers, to Aleppo, which was a gleaming white city, beautiful. There seemed to be a substantial underground economy and Aleppo seemed to be fairly prosperous in 1985-86. I remember the fragrance of night-blooming jasmine at dinner at an open air restaurant one night. When I went back ten years later it seemed even more prosperous. I returned to Syria with my husband in 1997 on vacation and one of the things that we did was to visit the Baron Hotel in Aleppo.

The Baron was legendary. Lawrence of Arabia slept on the second floor and left without paying his bar bill. Agatha Christie wrote part of "Murder on the Orient Express" there. King Faisal declared Syria's independence from the balcony, and Charles de Gaulle slept in the Presidential Suite. By the time I stayed there in 1985 it was pretty decrepit. There were spiders in the bed. This big old dog planted himself right across the threshold; anybody who stayed there will remember having to step over the dog to get into the Baron.

There was also a burned-out U.S. consulate in Aleppo which was being maintained by a skeleton group of caretakers. I don't know whatever happened to that place, but it was eerie.

Q: Did you ever go anywhere that might be considered unsafe?

BAROODY: Sometimes we ended up in places that were a bit dicey - near PLO training camps and such. But we took some lovely trips. I remember one in particular, going to the Syrian-Israel border to Quneitra in the Golan Heights. It's verdant, with hills and streams, on a plateau. There are dormant volcanoes and crater lakes in the area.

Looking at the Israeli border from Syria, there was this forbidding fence and all kinds of military forces. There was also a sign, which may have even had a smiley face, which

said in English: “Welcome to Israel!” So somebody had a sense of humor even in a war zone.

I was with another U.S. Embassy family that day in Quneitra, good friends, Martin Quinn and his wife Diane and daughters. We took our picnic and sat on the roof of this house. The houses were nestled into the hillside halfway down a ridge. The roofs were level with the road, and the houses looked out over the Golan Heights. I don’t know if anyone lived there, but no one objected to a group of cheerful foreigners having lunch atop the rafters. Our picnic “up on the roof” was a happy memory.

Q: Are you glad you chose Syria as your first post? You must have had some reservations about going to such an exotic and potentially dangerous place for your first assignment.

BAROODY: There were times I was stressed out. One reason I was on pins and needles at the beginning of my tour in Syria was that I was engaged to be married and my fiancé was in Tel Aviv. I arrived in Damascus August 3rd and it wasn't until October 25th that I found out definitively that my next tour of duty would be in Tel Aviv with my soon-to-be husband.

Prior to that, I thought I might have to choose between the love of my life and the Foreign Service, the career of my dreams. What would we do if I were assigned somewhere else and he was still in Tel Aviv? What was the point in getting married if we couldn't be in the same country? This is a problem a lot of tandem couples – in which both husband and wife are FSOs – face throughout their careers.

The fact that he and I have now been married thirty years tells you that it was a potentially life-changing issue. It was hard for us to communicate because there was no Internet back then. We couldn't call each other because there were no phone lines between Israel and Syria. We did sometimes send messages or small gifts with friends from the United Nations who were able to travel from Syria to Israel across the Golan Heights. We also met every other month in third countries. That’s how we got to know Cyprus pretty well.

My last day in Syria was April 30th. I departed for Tel Aviv by way of Larnaca, which is what we had to do – Damascus, Larnaca (Cyprus) to Tel Aviv. I arrived at 6:30 that night and went immediately with my fiancé to a dinner with members of the Israeli Defense Forces.

Q: You learned a great deal in that first tour, and I imagine that's what USIA wanted you to be able to do, even though they knew that you were restricted in what you would be able to accomplish because of the nature of the regime.

BAROODY: I did learn a lot in Syria and was only sorry I didn’t strengthen my language skills more when I had the chance. I had studied Arabic at FSI, and when I went to Damascus I took lessons at the Embassy. I paid for additional private lessons on my own because I really wanted to master Arabic, not an easy language. Going directly from

Damascus to Tel Aviv, I didn't continue to learn and use Arabic. In fact, I went to an Israeli language school, the Ulpan Akiva in Netanya, and studied Hebrew, so I never really nailed the Arabic.

Assistant Information Officer, Tel Aviv 1986-1988

Q: It's May 19th and we're continuing our interview with Judith Baroody in her next assignment in Tel Aviv from 1986 to 1988.

BAROODY: To set the scene on what was happening in Israel at the time, we were deeply involved in the peace process. There was a great deal of hope at that time. It was a promising time to be in the Middle East.

For one thing, it was peaceful in terms of the Palestinians. By the time 1987 rolled around, we had the first uprising, the first intifada, but in 1986 all was quiet. We were able to travel throughout the country and there was true hope because of the peace shuttle missions. We had some smart high-level people devoted to ending the Arab-Israeli conflict, back at the State Department and at the embassy and the consulate in Jerusalem. They called themselves the "peace processors."

Shimon Peres was the Prime Minister until October of 1986 and then it was Yitzhak Shamir. Yitzhak Rabin was central to the process; he had been Prime Minister for the first time from 1974-77 and he considered peace to be essential to the long-term survival of Israel, so that was also hopeful. The president was Chaim Hertzog.

Some of the big events that happened: in June 1986 Jonathan Pollard pled guilty to espionage, then in August 1987 Israel cancelled a program to build a fighter jet, the Lavi, that the United States had invested 1.6 billion dollars in. On the U.S. side, Ronald Reagan was President, George H.W. Bush was Vice President, and George Shultz was the Secretary of State.

I arrived in Tel Aviv from Damascus on April 30th, 1986. I was the last person to get off the plane. I had brought my big orange Syrian cat, Chami, with me and insisted on having his carrier next to me on the plane, so we were seated at the very back. My poor fiancé, Dick Krueger, was waiting anxiously by the side of the plane along with my new boss, Arthur Berger.

That very night – and this would be an indication of what to expect during this tour of duty – having gotten off this plane after a stressful day of packing out, saying goodbye in Damascus and traveling with a disgruntled cat, I went to a reception at the Japanese embassy and then to a dinner party with members of the Israeli Defense Forces. That was going to be emblematic of my life in Tel Aviv for the next two and a quarter very happy years.

My assignment was to be the Assistant Information Officer at the U.S. Information Service office (USIS), working for Arthur Berger, the Information Officer, and Howard

Lane, the Public Affairs Officer. Dick and I had a tight group of friends and I think that's why this was such a happy place for us, that and the strong sense of mission and hope for historic political change. Arthur soon moved on to his next post, The Hague, and Bob Hall replaced him. He left after a brief tour to work at the Pentagon, so my third direct supervisor in two years was Don Cofman.

My husband was the Assistant Air Attaché in Tel Aviv, which is why he had been studying Hebrew at FSI. So I had two jobs in Israel, one as the Assistant Information Officer and the second as a military spouse. That's a job in and of itself. The same was also true for Dick: he worked both as an attaché and a diplomatic spouse.

We had a small house in Herzliya Pituah, which was a "diplomatic ghetto" in a positive sense. This house was one of a few constructed by the United States in the 1960s that are still owned by the USG and used by the embassy. It was a small house with a big yard and 110 voltage in the kitchen because it was American-built.

We lived on the same block as the President of Israel, Chaim Hertzog, five blocks from Abba Eban (Chairman of the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee), and about a block from the beach, a luminous beach on the Mediterranean Sea.

The first thing I did when I arrived was to begin studying Hebrew at the Ulpan Akiva. I had been the Assistant Information Officer in Damascus although we didn't really deal with the press. In Tel Aviv, it was quite the opposite: we had constant interactions with the media, an aggressive, intelligent group of reporters, some of whom went on to become famous. Officers throughout the embassy conducted interviews and otherwise communicated with the media.

Ambassador Thomas Pickering did a lot of interviews. He was articulate and precise with his words; he had an incredible memory. I sat in on a lot of his interviews and managed press encounters for others at the embassy, such as Political Officer Dan Kurtzer, and Deputy Chief of Mission Bob Flaten and later Arthur Hughes. It was such a talented embassy team: Nicholas Burns, Molly Williamson, Joseph Sullivan, Roger Harrison in the Political Section – they all went on to become ambassadors.

That level of excellence was seen throughout the embassy, across the board. The Consular Officer, Wayne Leininger, was interviewed about visas and American Citizen Services and came across as so knowledgeable that I was convinced he had a degree in immigration law. The political officers, the defense attachés – all first-rate and willing to interact with the media. So we were very busy with press work. These were high-powered journalists, such as Tom Friedman, who was the *New York Times* reporter, and Wolf Blitzer, who was a reporter for *The Jerusalem Post.*

One of the big stories was the Lavi. It was an Israeli aircraft that was being designed at great expense with American funding. It was never actually produced, other than the prototypes, but it was a big deal for the embassy during this time period. When the Israelis were preparing for a rollout of the Lavi prototype (they actually built six

prototypes), it was a significant news story that caught the interest of several American politicians. They wanted to be in on the launch.

Congressman Jack Kemp was flown to Israel by Israel Aircraft Industries for the rollout. He was actually in the cockpit of the Lavi as it was being rolled onto the tarmac. Another congressional representative that came for the presentation was Larry Smith of Hollywood, Florida. As a Public Diplomacy Officer and Air Force wife, I was assigned to work on this CODEL (congressional delegation). It was an adventure.

Congressman Smith had been criticized in the media for taking too many junkets. So they arrived on this distinctive Air Force transport. My husband met the aircraft on the landing strip and I was there as well. Congressman Smith told my husband: "Hide the plane!"

It was a big Air Force jet, a VC-135 (Air Force One equivalent) but he demanded that we find someplace to hide it because he didn't want the media to know he was there. They soon found out. I have to tell you that when it comes to junkets, this was a good one: we went to Masada, we went to the Dead Sea, we went to Jericho, and of course we went to Jerusalem.

Congressman Charlie Wilson of Lufkin, Texas was part of this particular delegation - you might remember him from the movie "Charlie Wilson's War." He accomplished some important work in his lifetime, notably, leading Congress to support Operation Cyclone to supply weapons to Afghani fighters during the Soviet-Afghan war.

But on this particular occasion, Charlie Wilson called from the plane demanding a car. He got off the plane and immediately left for Netanya to visit his Israeli girlfriend. He escorted her to official events, including a reception with Israel's Minister of Defense. She showed up about three weeks later at an embassy reception on the arm of an Assistant Secretary from the Department of Defense.

Q: Israel is famous throughout the Foreign Service for the number of CODELS and visitors it gets.

BAROODY: Every single person in that embassy gets drawn into preparing for congressional delegations, and we had a lot of other visitors as well. For example, Vice President Bush came, and that was like a presidential visit. As a low-level second tour officer, I was always pulled into working the visits. My job for the VP Bush visit was to make sure that every official member of the delegation received a copy of that day's newspapers, the Wireless File and press clips related to the trip.

We set up a press center at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem and a USIS (U.S. Information Service) office there. It was more complicated to set up a press center back then because there was no such thing as Wireless 4Gs or hot spots for accessing the Internet. You had to lay in the lines so that the State Department traveling press could file their reports.

There also was an official dinner at the Knesset for which I was a site officer, so we worked on credentialing and providing updated information to official attendees. We accompanied the White House and State Department traveling press wherever they went.

The big event of that visit was that Vice President Bush and Shimon Peres signed a tourism agreement between the U.S. and Israel. The amount of work that goes into these visits is phenomenal. You have to transcribe whatever speeches or remarks are given and then turn them over to the White House staff for editing.

This July visit ended with a "wheels-up party." That's a nice tradition within the Foreign Service - whenever a visit like that takes place, you have a wheels-up party afterward to talk about how things went and to blow off steam. It's like a cast party at the end of a theatrical run.

I worked primarily with the Israeli media, but also reached out to the Arab community, the Arab Israelis and the Druze community. I ended up being a point of contact at the embassy for the Druze community.

Q: What was the percentage of the population in Israel that were Druze?

BAROODY: It's always been small. The total population of Israel at that time was a little over four million people. The number of Druze Israelis was about 100,000. I developed a connection with the Druze Sheikh Kamal Tarif. I visited him, took him gifts; we went to his daughter's wedding. The Druze have been a small but pivotal force in Arab culture in Israel and Lebanon.

Q: What was a typical day for you?

BAROODY: Let's start with the setting. The embassy was directly on the beach. I had this tiny office as a second-tour officer, but with a waterfront view of the Mediterranean. You could go out at lunchtime and walk on the beach or eat in one of the cafes along the corniche.

The problem was there was nowhere to park. Believe it or not, there was a public parking garage underneath the embassy that did not belong to the USG, and people who worked in the embassy were not allowed to park there. People from the general public who paid on a monthly or yearly basis had designated spots (and these slots had been reserved years in advance). The garage was closed to the public about a decade later.

What was a typical day? My husband and I commuted together the 12 miles from home in Herzliya Pituah to downtown Tel Aviv. Even then the traffic was so heavy it would take us 45 minutes. My first task of the day would be to draft the media review, working with my Foreign Service National staffers Zvi Sheinberg and Ofra Yogev.

We would go through the Israeli media, search for items about bilateral relations or U.S. policy, and then we'd write it up and send it to Washington by cable. If something

important happened, such as the visit of a U.S. dignitary that received extensive press coverage, we would spend extra time reviewing those articles or write a separate cable about the visit.

The Foreign Press Center in Washington might call for advice if, for example, an Israeli reporter wanted to interview President Reagan, and we'd provide a readout of that person's credentials.

Part of my work was management. As the supervisor of the locally-employed Information staff, I handled personnel issues. Once, our chief Foreign Service National (FSN) for the media became demoralized because she had been left out of training she had requested, so the next time an opportunity for training came along we snapped it up.

Sometimes I sorted out disagreements among the FSNs. Two members of my staff, a man and a woman, were not on the best of terms. The gentleman in question had been the son-in-law of the female FSN, and had divorced her daughter. It was not an amicable breakup. One morning, the lady rushed into my office and said, "You have to do something about this!" It turns out the guy had placed a bumper sticker on his car saying "Mother-in-Law in Trunk." It took serious diplomatic skills to resolve that dispute.

That was how my day would go, interlaced with lots of meetings. The Public Affairs Officer, Howard Lane, had one big project that he focused on during his tour in Israel. The Voice of America (VOA) wanted to put a transponder in the Negev desert. Howie worked on getting authorization for the structure for at least two years before the plan was finally killed because of concerns over the tower's potential impact on bird migration.

Then, on Halloween day 1986, we got WorldNet. WorldNet became my special mission in Israel. This was the initiative of Charles Z. Wick, the director of the U.S. Information Agency and a close friend of President Reagan. He could get resources for the agency. He had this visionary idea to have interactive interviews via television satellite. High-level USG officials and academic experts in the United States would go to our WorldNet studio in Washington, and host-country audiences would come to the U.S. embassy to talk to them via satellite. It was two-way audio, one-way video – revolutionary in 1986. Our audience could see the person being interviewed, but not vice-versa.

This was before cable television, before CNN, certainly before the widespread availability of the Internet and Skype. The idea was to have the kind of intimacy and candor possible across thousands of miles that you have when you talk to somebody face-to-face.

It was too bad that it wasn't two-way, but at least when students or reporters or politicians in Israel were talking to someone in the United States, they could see them on a big screen. They could have that sense of being in the same room with an American official or expert. WorldNet was my portfolio and I ran with it.

Q: And of course you'd had the previous TV experience, so it was right up your alley.

BAROODY: Exactly. We had weekly meetings about what kind of program we were going to propose to Washington to have on WorldNet. There was a board of officers who oversaw the project - although I was in charge - who would provide advice about people to be interviewed and suggest topics to be discussed. We covered a lot of them.

We presented a WorldNet program, for example, on university-industry relations. The United States and Israel are leaders in this area, but you'd be surprised how many countries don't have that kind of nexus between industry and scholars. We did another one on coastal zone management and pollution in the Mediterranean and many others – on superconductivity, the Strategic Defense Initiative. We were lucky - maybe because it was Israel or because WorldNet was new and Charles Wick had such good contacts throughout the government - to conduct interviews with heavy hitters such as Henry Kissinger and George Shultz.

There was an auditorium with theater seating in the embassy, a perfect venue for the programs. Because WorldNet was such a novelty, people were still excited by it and we could persuade journalists, academics and professionals from an array of backgrounds to leave work and come into the embassy to participate in the programs.

We would target people who were interested in particular subjects. For example, if we had a program on coastal zone management we would look in our DRS system (the Direct Record System contact list), find out who was interested in the environment and send them letters, inviting them to the WorldNets. We would also invite reporters specializing in those subjects.

One of the people who was invited to a WorldNet program was stopped when he was coming through embassy security because he was carrying a gun into the embassy. He said “I'm with the Israeli Defense Forces Reserve, and we are required to carry guns.” That was no doubt correct, but it wasn't such a good thing for embassy security, so he had to find a place down the street where he could stow the firearm.

We would use the video exchange as a centerpiece and beef it up with live presentations to make it a more substantive program. I or other officers would give introductory remarks before the WorldNet and we'd have questions and answers at the end of the transmission. That made it more worth the time and hassle of coming to the embassy.

Q: Were you able to travel in Israel?

BAROODY: We were there at a great time, before the Intifada began, and could travel throughout the country. We loved going south to the Dead Sea and to Agadir, and north to Caesarea and the Galilee. One of our favorite weekend trips was to a dude ranch established by an American veteran of World War II near the Mount of Olives called Vered HaGalil, or “Rose of the Galilee.” We’d stay in a rustic cabin, ride horses through

the hills overlooking the Sea of Galilee and the Mount of Olives, and come back to the café for American apple pie.

The best travel, though, was with our church. As an Episcopalian, I was baptized but never confirmed. After about a year in Israel, I decided to be confirmed and started taking confirmation lessons with Reverend Michael West at our church, St. Luke's Anglican. It was a tiny church within walking distance of our house, and the congregation was mostly British, American, and South African diplomats. Reverend West was a biblical scholar from the UK.

Once a month, the congregation would go on field trips, and as you can imagine, living in Israel, we were privileged to visit most of the key places mentioned in the Bible. We traveled to Jerusalem, Jericho, Nazareth, Capernaum, Bethlehem, everywhere - and Reverend West would tell us about the biblical events that took place there and the theological significance, then we'd share a picnic.

I was confirmed, along with another embassy staffer, at St. George's Anglican Cathedral in Jerusalem on a day so hot that scrub brush on the hillsides burst into flames. It was "Jerusalem Day," celebrated by the Israelis and opposed by the Palestinians. The ambassador gave us permission to go but required us to travel in an armored car because of security concerns.

Dick and I left Tel Aviv in July 1988 and returned to the U.S. We were looking forward to being together in Northern Virginia as a newly-married couple, but it didn't work out that way.

Office of Program Development at USIA, American University 1988-1992

Q: What happened?

BAROODY: We thought that I would get a job at USIA headquarters in Washington and Dick would go to the Pentagon. Richard Armitage, who was the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, had name-requested Dick to be on his staff. But the Air Force had other plans – they sent him to become the Director of Intelligence Requirements at U.S. Central Command Air Forces at Shaw Air Force Base in Sumter, South Carolina.

It was a prestigious job, but it meant we were 450 miles apart - eight hours by car. It would be our first, but not final, experience of having to be apart because of work. I was miserable without him, and became increasingly so as time passed, which had some unexpected ramifications.

Q: What did you do at USIA?

BAROODY: I went to work for P/DE, which stood for Program Development in Economics. My geographic portfolio was Africa. We recruited speakers to go to

embassies around the world and talk about some aspect of economics that helped advance administration goals. At that time, there was a big push to promote privatization. My boss, Gail Gulliksen, told me to recruit new talent, especially prize winners, be sure to meet deadlines and respond to every cable sent to us.

The first week, I called all of the "usual suspects" – the economic scholars we could count on to travel overseas as speakers – to introduce myself. I also sent letters of introduction. At the same time, I was still moving into our condo in Alexandria, dealing with our household effects shipment and trying to retrieve our cars, being shipped from Israel. Dick was already in South Carolina. The first few times, moving seems like an adventure. Trust me, it doesn't last!

The best part of the job was working with my colleagues – Gail, Helen Sebsow, Than Lwin. All of them are still friends all these decades later. USIA had a friendly work environment. Generally we weren't competing against each other and the agency was small enough so you could get to know a pretty sizable percentage of your fellow officers, especially in your geographic area.

By November, though, I was beside myself with loneliness, being without my husband. We saw each other every other weekend and I acquired a second cat, but it wasn't enough, so I came up with a crazy idea – take a leave of absence from my new career and get a PhD.

Doctoral Program, American University, 1989-1992

By November 1988, I started talking to American University about the School of International Service and their doctoral program. I applied and was put on a waiting list. Later, I was told that my background as a television reporter had flagged to some on the selection committee that I could never be a serious scholar, but my GRE scores saved the day. As it happened, one of the other candidates who had been selected decided to go to Boston University, so I was off the waiting list and on my way to a PhD.

I began the doctoral program in International Relations in September, 1989. The Office of Personnel at USIA was kind enough to allow me to take Leave Without Pay for nine months, long enough to complete the mandatory courses that were given only during the day. The justification was that the degree was related to our work. I returned to USIA full-time and completed the rest of the program at night, finishing the PhD in International Relations in three years.

My dissertation was later published as a book, *Media Access and the Military: the Case of the Gulf War*. Having a publication has been one of the most gratifying achievements of my professional life. It's not a best-seller but is still in print and held in library collections around the world. The chairman of my dissertation committee, Dr. Nanette Levinson, deserves my undying gratitude for pushing me and encouraging me to complete it.

Meanwhile, my husband in South Carolina was equally miserable and decided to retire from the Air Force at age 44 and come home. I have always thanked him, and my lucky stars, for what he was willing to do – to make my career primary and follow me from post to post.

Deputy Policy Officer, Office of North Africans. Near Eastern, and South Asian Affairs, USIA, 1990-1992

Q: Did you have a low-stress job when you returned to USIA that allowed you to continue the PhD?

BAROODY: It was demanding, though much more so because I was preparing for comprehensive exams and writing scholarly papers for my night classes at the same time. I worked with some great officers in USIA's NEA/SA Bureau as Deputy Policy Officer. Bill Rugh was the Director and Ed Bernier was the Deputy Director. My first supervisor was Policy Officer Peter Reuss; the second was Peter Kovach when Peter Reuss retired.

January 17, 1991 was the first full day of Operation Desert Storm, and analyzing and reporting regional public reaction to our military actions in Iraq and Kuwait took up much of my day. I also recruited speakers to travel to the region and to appear on WorldNet, and drafted the bureau's weekly highlights.

In March I was told to pack my bags and head to Bermuda for a summit between President George H.W. Bush and British Prime Minister John Major. There were numerous countdown meetings at the Hamilton Princess Hotel. It was windy, warm and humid. The President arrived in the late afternoon on Thursday, March 14 and the traveling press arrived after midnight.

The weather turned dark and stormy, with high tides and driving rain, but that didn't stop the President from fishing in the choppy waters and playing golf at the Mid-Ocean Golf Club in the rain, lashed sideways by the wind. My job was to escort the press around the course and on to the bus, all the while thinking, "Why can't he just pop in a video and relax like a normal person?" The President met with Prime Minister Major at Government House, planted a tree and had a press conference. After all that downpour and gale-force squalls, his comment was, "It's just as pleasant as I remembered it."

The most memorable thing I did for USIA NEA was go to Spain in October 1991 to provide public diplomacy support for the Madrid Peace Conference. This international conference was hosted by Spain and co-sponsored by the U.S. and the USSR to encourage the Israelis and Palestinians to resume peace negotiations.
The Secretary of State was James Baker and George H.W. Bush was President of the U.S.; Mikhail Gorbachev was the President of the USSR. It would be the last conference held by both super-powers, since the Soviet Union fell apart soon afterward. The Israelis said they wouldn't come to the conference if the PLO were there, but the PLO sent an "advisory delegation" headed by Faisal Husseini.

I packed up my bags and flew Trans World Airlines to Madrid. I met up with my colleague, Lea Perez, and checked into the Hotel Melia Castilla. We went to the embassy, then went with our USIS brethren to the Royal Palace for a site visit. We later did another site visit at the office of the Spanish Prime Minister at Moncloa Palace and returned to the embassy for a countdown meeting. I was issued a badge with two royal blue triangles indicating I was a member of the Core Group and allowing me entry to all sites.

The first event involving the media was a bilateral press conference by Secretary Baker and Spanish President Felipe González. My job was to shepherd the traveling journalists, including the formidable Helen Thomas, the first female member of the White House press corps. Madrid was cold, foggy and damp, and smelled of cigar smoke.

Because of my Arabic skills, I was assigned to escort Faisal Husseini and Hanan Ashrawi, who were the delegates from the PLO, in the Ifema Convention Center. Dr. Ashrawi and I had the University of Virginia in common. I led them to their press briefings, and we formed a "secure package" with the Spanish Guardia Civil cordoning around us, pushing and shuffling. We were snow-blind from the megawatt video lights, and the decibel level was heightened by echoes off the walls of the Ifema hall, which was as big as an airplane hangar. It was the largest gathering of journalists under one roof in history.

Later I was assigned as press site officer for the Israel-Syria bilateral meeting in the Palacio de Viana, the official residence of Spain's Minister of Foreign Affairs. It was an elegant place with red silk walls, floral carpets and overstuffed couches, immense chandeliers. There were fits and starts before the talks got underway – we waited nine hours for the Syrians to show up - but once they did, the Israelis and Syrians conferred for five hours.

One evening all the American public diplomacy officers there to work on the conference got together for dinner al fresco at Los Galayos restaurant off the Plaza Mayor. Some of USIA's heavy hitters were there, including Kenton Keith, Marcelle Wahba and Chris Snow. Kenton said we were not to discuss work. We had garlic soup, prawns, mushrooms, Rioja Tinto wine and paella. A guitarist serenaded us with "Guantanamera" and the fragrance of one lady's Poison perfume threatened to overwhelm the taste of the food. We then went to a café to hear a blues band – harmonica, drums, guitar – Jack Daniels and waxy beer. Within a day of arrival, Kenton Keith knew every jazz club in town.

The Madrid conference didn't lead to immediate results, but set the stage for the Oslo Accords in 1993 and a Jordan-Israel peace treaty in 1994. Meanwhile, I was bidding on an onward assignment and got my first choice – Casablanca.

Branch Public Affairs Officer, Casablanca, Morocco 1993-1995

Q: How did you decide to choose Morocco as your next overseas assignment?

BAROODY: My husband and I were equal partners when it came to decisions such as selecting our next post, which is why I bid on Casablanca and lobbied to go there. Dick had spent part of his childhood in Casablanca as the son of a U.S. Air Force civilian official when it was "French Morocco" and the U.S. had a strategic base there.

Dick's family moved to Morocco in 1955 and was there during the rising violence as Moroccans began to demand independence and the return of their king from exile. Dick's father was posted at Nouasseur Air Base just outside of Casablanca, where the U.S. had B-36 and B-47 bombers poised to take off for the Soviet Union. Nouasseur was also a staging area for Strategic Air Command. Once Morocco was independent, the new government wanted the U.S. to close the bases and remove the nukes, so we pulled out. Nouasseur later became the Mohammed V International Airport.

Q: When you went to Casablanca, did your husband remember anything from when he was there as a child?

BAROODY: Casablanca had grown exponentially since the late 50s. It was kind of a sleepy town when Dick's family left. By the time we got there in 1993, it was the business and media center of Morocco – a big city, with about three million residents in the city and six million in the greater metropolitan area. It's one of the largest cities in Africa, and has the pollution, crime and crowding of most big cities – and a big port. About fifty American corporations had offices there. Not at all what you expect from the "Casablanca" movie.

But Dick oriented himself quickly from the few landmarks that remained from the 1950s. Some were gone – the statue of Marshal Lyautey, the French Resident General in Morocco from 1912-1925, had been moved from Victory Square to inside the grounds of the French consulate.

We did find the house where his family had lived in the seaside town of Fedala, now called Mohamedia. It had belonged to a French dentist and by Dick's account was once lovely, but by the time we saw it the bougainvillea had overgrown the yard and the house appeared to be abandoned.

Q: Was your housing in Casablanca as nice as it was in Tel Aviv?

BAROODY: We moved into an apartment designated as "PAO housing." My predecessor had lived there and it was a given that we were going to move in there. The best thing about it was the location, directly across the street from "Dar America," America House, with our library, cultural and press sections, which I directed.

I'd literally cross the street and be at my office. It was a two story apartment. We had the two top floors of the building, with a sauna and wrap-around balcony with views of the Atlantic. It wasn't well-constructed, but it was a lot better than most of the consulate housing in Casablanca.

Q: So did you report to the Consul General?

BAROODY: No, the Branch Public Affairs Officer reported to the Country Public Affairs Officer, who served at the embassy in Rabat 90 minutes north. I'd go up to Rabat at least once a week to meet with PAO Robert Petersen and the rest of the USIS staff.

In Casablanca, I met regularly with Consul General Anne Cary and supported her in cultural and press matters, but she didn't write my evaluation. Anne's husband, John McNamara, was the Labor Attaché. The consulate was two blocks from our apartment.

I was responsible for all public diplomacy programming in southern Morocco, including Casablanca, Marrakesh, and all points south. For someone who values autonomy, it was a perfect set-up. I had the best office of my career – half the upper floor of a European-style villa, with its own conference area, private restroom and French doors opening onto a balcony overlooking the back garden.

I supervised a staff of eleven Foreign Service Nationals - talented, hard-working and well-connected professionals. Then, they were valued staff; now they're dear friends: Boubker Mazoz, Soumaya Nhairy, Amina Jaouad, Abdelkrim Redadi, Fatiha Ouardi and others.

It's a good thing I had such strong FSN support, because the minute I arrived in North Africa, I went directly from the airport to work on a major event – the 50th anniversary commemoration of the "Casablanca Conference." In January 1943, President Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill and Charles de Gaulle met at the Anfa Hotel in Casablanca to plan the end of World War II. They agreed to demand "unconditional surrender" of Germany and the Axis powers.

The 50th anniversary commemoration was on a grand scale, with 85 scholars and dignitaries who showed up for the speeches and ceremonies. It gave us a chance to meet Pamela Harriman, former daughter-in-law of Winston Churchill, who arrived in Casablanca during the period before she was offered the job of U.S. Ambassador to France. Presidential historian Doris Kearns Goodwin and others were on hand.

My first job was to help the Consul General prepare for her televised news conference – Anne's French was excellent – and I ended up giving welcoming remarks at some of the events. The Dar America staff was essential. I realized that I could count on them even before I was able to match faces with names.

The second year we were in Morocco, we witnessed the opening of the Hassan II Mosque, the fifth largest mosque in the world. It stands on a jut of land that reaches into the Atlantic, so it appears that the mosque is floating on water. It's so huge that over 100,000 people can worship there at one time.

King Hassan II had commissioned it; work began in 1986 and went on for seven years. Non-Muslims are generally not allowed in mosques in Morocco, but we were invited to

enter it when it was still under construction. A month after it opened, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres made a surprise stopover in Casablanca and toured the mosque.

Incidentally, just down the coast from the Grand Mosque was another landmark, the first McDonald's in Africa or the Arab world. It opened in 1992 on the corniche with a view of the beach and the ocean. We went there whenever we needed to indulge a Mac Attack or just pretend we were home, but it was so popular that we had to wait forever to get our fix. The only time there were no lines was during Ramadan, when Muslims do not eat before sundown. We'd pull in for lunch, grab our burger, fries and coke, and enjoy the breezes off the Atlantic in solitary splendor.

Another major event took place the second year I was there: a final meeting of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and treaty signing in Marrakesh. GATT was a multilateral treaty originally signed in 1947 to promote international trade. In Marrakesh, 123 countries signed agreements that replaced GATT and led to the creation of the World Trade Organization.

Vice President Al Gore was there to represent the U.S. One of my jobs was to act as Control Officer for his wife, Tipper Gore. She loved children and photography, so we set up a photo exchange between Moroccan and American elementary school students. Tipper Gore brought disposable cameras so the Moroccan kids could take pictures to be shared with their counterparts in the U.S.

It was an era of delicate diplomacy in U.S.-Moroccan relations. The U.S. was reducing aid to Morocco and encouraging them to increase economic development and trade. We promoted democratization, privatization - still a favored concept in Washington – and human rights. I met with members of Casablanca's Jewish community, about a thousand remaining, to discuss religious freedom and their status in Morocco.

Casablanca was the media capital of Morocco, so dealing with the press was a big part of my portfolio. The speakers we brought from the U.S. for programs would meet with reporters first, multiplying the impact of their message. When the first ambassador during my tenure left, Frederick Vreeland, we put together a step-by-step plan to introduce the new one, Marc Charles Ginsburg, to the press.

Another big event that took place in Casablanca during our watch was the Middle East-North Africa Economic Summit in October-November 1994. King Hassan II invited representatives from 61 countries and business leaders from throughout the world to advance peace in the region and promote economic potential. About 2,000 people showed up. It was a truly historic event – half of Israel's cabinet attended, including Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, along with Warren Christopher and Yasser Arafat.

The first day of the Economic Summit at the Royal Mansour Hotel, the ambassador called me at home and told me to get a teleprompter. We procured the only one in

Casablanca within two hours, at considerable expense. Secretary Christopher held a press conference and then there was a private event for the American delegation at the Royal Palace. We produced transcripts and made sure the U.S. principals had all the press clippings from the event.

Q: How was your budget? Where you able to do much cultural programming?

BAROODY: Money was tight. The foreign affairs budget had been reduced and the State Department cut operations to save costs. They closed the U.S. Consulate in Alexandria, Egypt around that time, in September of 1993. But we were inventive and had an eager audience of Moroccans who welcomed whatever lectures, art exhibits and concerts we could conjure up at Dar America.

Many of the programs were done on the cheap but with high quality and designed to advance the goals of our Country Plan. I personally gave a powerpoint about Washington Irving, an American writer, historian and diplomat. Most people remember his name as author of "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" but he was also a consul in Spain and wrote a magical book, "Tales of the Alhambra," about his experiences in the Grenada region and the impoverished squatters who took up residence in the ruins of the Alhambra Palace.

We staged an evening performance of "A Streetcar Named Desire" with an all-Moroccan cast in the back garden of the Dar America villa. I still remember the lead actor, a young Berber man, calling "Stella!" up the back stairs.

Our most ambitious no-cost production was a musical presentation by "The Young Ambassadors," students from Brigham Young University. Successive troupes have been performing around the world since 1970. The deal was that we were to find them housing and the cast would put on a couple of shows.

They held up their end brilliantly – the shows were great and the Moroccans were clamoring to get in the theater. The problem was on our end. The first time they were in Casablanca, we put them up in what was purported to be a sports training camp with bunk beds and nice facilities. Instead, it turned out to be a ramshackle bunch of wooden shacks with porta-potties at one end. What a disaster!

My husband and I hosted a dinner at our apartment and invited the entire cast of BYU students, and offered to wash and dry their undergarments before they got on the bus for the next venue. It turned out that washing so many clothes was no problem – our intrepid housekeeper Leila had it done in no time. What didn't work out so well was the dryer. It just didn't have the capacity to dry all those clothes. So we sent these talented young Mormons on their way with damp undergarments.

In a victory of optimism over experience, the Young Ambassadors returned to Casablanca a week later for additional performances. This time we put them up in "home visits" – the Consulate staff hosted the students in their homes. One of the engineers my husband worked with insisted: "I want Tiffany." We assigned him some strapping young

man instead. But you couldn't fault the engineer's taste. The following year, Tiffany Stoker won the Miss California contest and was a runner-up for Miss America.

Q: Did you have official duties at the Consulate besides public diplomacy?

BAROODY: Yes, I carried my weight in terms of consular duties. I shared courier duty – taking official correspondence to the embassy in Rabat and acting as Duty Officer about every six weeks.

Usually, being Duty Officer was no trouble. It meant you couldn't leave town for that week, including weekends. But then there's always the exception to the rule. The Economic Attaché, Michael Ratney, was scheduled to be the Duty Officer the week of August 20-27, and he wanted to travel somewhere so he asked me to trade weeks with him. "Nothing will happen," he said. "I promise."

On Sunday August 21, 1994, Royal Air Maroc Flight 630 crashed ten minutes after takeoff from the airport in Agadir on route to Casablanca. All 44 people on board were killed, among them 20 foreigners, non-Moroccans. The plane dove into a remote site in the Atlas Mountains, and it was later determined that the pilot had deliberately crashed the plane as an act of suicide.

For a Duty Officer, the question of whether there were American citizens on board a fatal crash is critical. If an American is killed, the Duty Officer has to go to the site of the event, collect information about the cause of death, and work with the Bureau of Consular Affairs to inform the next-of-kin and repatriate the remains at the family's expense.

If there had been an American citizen on board, I would have had to take off for a long trip south to an isolated area in the mountains. I was on the phone for at least ten hours, working with the airline, the Moroccan police, keeping the Consul General and the State Department Executive Secretariat informed. After a long day, security investigators gave official notice that there were no Americans on board and I was able to stand down and close the case.

Three days later we learned that the preliminary investigation was wrong. One person on board did in fact hold American citizenship by virtue of having been born in the U.S., with the parents returning to Morocco after the birth. Lesson learned is never take being a Duty Officer lightly because you never know what might happen. And by the way, Michael Ratney, you still owe me.

Q: How was your husband spending his time? Revisiting the places he knew from his childhood?

BAROODY: Dick is an enterprising guy and needs to be employed, so he accepted a job at the consulate with the Engineering Support Center, the regional hub that installs equipment for embassy security. His job would be to pack up security cameras, alarms

and monitoring devices and ship them to neighboring posts. He also supervised acquisition and inventory control of diplomatic security equipment for the NEA region.

Dick also took over running the weekly movie program at the Churchill Club where American consulate staff hung out after hours. He and I got to select the movies, so he showed a lot of rom-coms. The Consul General asked him to run the consulate's tennis tournament and when she realized how diligent he was, she asked him to take on a number of other tasks. At the end of our tour, she nominated Dick for the worldwide "Volunteer of the Year" award.

Q: Did you have a chance to do much travel?

BAROODY: We traveled all over Morocco, especially the southern part. I hit the road quite a bit for work. I could hop on the Marrakesh express train and be there in three hours to support the American Language Center with contributions of books or speakers. We traveled throughout "the Great South," as it's called, to meet with educators and provide materials about the U.S., and to the resort town of Ifrane in the Atlas Mountains, where the Saudis funded the establishment of a new university, Al Akhawayn.

Al Akhawayn means "the two brothers" in Arabic, and refers to the two kings involved, Saudi Arabia's King Fahd and Morocco's King Hassan II. It's a small university, with just over 2000 students. The courses are taught in English and it's based on American liberal arts schools, so you can see our interest in collaborating with the faculty and administrators. Seeing a university being built and organized was exciting – it opened in January 1995.

On my final journey for work in Morocco, my cultural assistant Abdelkrim Redadi, driver Embarek Kemouni and I went to Ouarzazate, gateway to the Sahara Desert, to meet with the "Moroccan Association of Teachers of English." We stopped in a number of small towns where we had connections to deliver English-language books for students and confer with Inspectors of English, Peace Corps workers and university contacts.

Along the way we stopped in our driver's village. Embarek was a thin, wizened Berber who always wore a green woven beanie indicating his tribal affiliation and ate by himself. In the beginning, I had a tough time communicating with him because my Moroccan Arabic wasn't the best. At some point as we were driving along and I was trying to tell him where I wanted to go, I gave up and spoke to him in French. It turned out he spoke fluent, elegant French and some German as well. French nuns had established the school in his village.

At the Consulate, Embarek was a driver, a low-status job. When we went by his village in the rose-growing region of southern Morocco, it became clear that he was one of the most respected residents there, with a multi-story house and caretaker staff. There was no electricity in the village, but the residents were saving up to buy a solar generator with help from USAID. We saw flowers, streams shimmering beside the dirt roads, sunlight filtering through the forest. It made me see Embarek in a new light.

Q: What about personal travel or hobbies – have any time for that?

BAROODY: Absolutely! One of our favorite places was Essaouira, a town down the coast from Casablanca that has been populated since prehistoric times because of its protected bay. The Romans were there, Phoenicians; the Portuguese built a fortress there, and it once had a large Jewish population. Jimi Hendrix and Frank Zappa dropped by and left their mark on Essaouira. We liked to stay in a boutique hotel called the Villa Maroc, redolent of the distinctive fragrance of thuya wood, from a type of cedar tree found only in Morocco.

We took my sister and brother-in-law there when they visited. We also took them to a dreadful place in Oualidia. The bed was a straw mattress on a tarp covering a concrete block. It was so bad I wrote a humorous short story based on the experience entitled "The Worst Hotel in the World."

We also traveled with our embassy colleagues. The Community Liaison Office (CLO) organized trips. The most memorable was the "Trip to the Great South" in March 1995. A busload of us headed to the Kasbah of Ait Benhaddou, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and on to Ouarzazate, pronounced like "where's-that-at?" These towns would be familiar to anyone who watches a lot of movies because they're often used to represent Arab villages.

We ventured into the Sahara, got on camels and rode for two and a half hours further. Bedouins fixed us dinner on an open campfire and we slept in tents under the desert stars.

I wrote an article about the trip for the embassy newsletter and mentioned that the kids on the bus sang the Herman's Hermits song "I'm Henry VIII, I Am" repeatedly across the breadth of Morocco ("second verse, same as the first. A little bit louder and a little bit worse.") The children and their proud parents thought it was an honor to be mentioned in print.

Q: Any hobbies besides travel?

BAROODY: Yes, and it also involves the embassy newsletter, *The Maghreb Messenger*. My favorite avocation was a benign form of teasing my embassy colleagues. Casablanca is a major metropolis and the economic and media capital of Morocco. Rabat, though smaller and quieter, is the royal, political capital where the U.S. Embassy is located. There was a friendly competition between the embassy and consulate staffs.

To make sure our brethren to the north understood that Casablanca had its charms, I came up with the idea of writing a weekly column in the embassy newsletter called "Casa Corner." My primary subject was restaurant reviews, to drive home the fact that truly exceptional Moroccan restaurants were in Casablanca, Marrakesh and points south. I also wrote about Casablanca's history and attractions worth visiting in the southern region.

The second ambassador during our time in Morocco, Marc Charles Ginsburg, was a major foodie. He owned an interest in the Sutton Place Gourmet in old town Alexandria. He would read my columns and come up with reasons to visit Casablanca and check out the restaurants. Writing "Casa Corner" was a lot of fun, an excellent pretext for fine dining and interviewing long-time residents to learn about the city's past. I guess my work was appreciated. Years later the "Maghreb Messenger" was still rerunning my columns.

Another way we spent our free time was as members of the congregation of St. John's Anglican Church. It was built in 1906 on land owned by the British Crown just outside the walls of the city. General Patton attended and donated the pulpit. I was on the church vestry, the governing board, and we kept hearing that the Moroccan government wanted to move the church. When St. John's was built, it was on the outside of town; now, it's next to the Hyatt Regency Hotel in the center of Casablanca, sitting on some valuable real estate.

Even though the Moroccan Government was making generous offers, we didn't want to move. The small chapel is surrounded by a garden with palm trees and a British cemetery, enclosed within white walls. It's an oasis of quiet, history and greenery in the middle of pollution, concrete and bustle.

I got wind of the fact that Prince Charles was coming to Casablanca on a trade mission, the first member of the British Royal Family to visit Morocco. I told the other vestry members, and we concluded that if Prince Charles would attend a service at St. John's, the Moroccans, who respect royalty, would understand that the British Crown still cared about the church and they would leave us alone.

We sent out an appeal through both diplomatic and ecclesiastical channels – through the British Embassy and the Anglican Bishop, resident in Cyprus, with authority over the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf.

Prince Charles came on March 17, 1995, St. Patrick's Day. He agreed to come to St. John's for a brief mid-day service. The congregation was told we were to be seated in our pews when he arrived and remain there after the royal party left, for security reasons. We all understood and complied.

But when we finally did leave the chapel, we found the Prince in the garden, waiting for us. He shook the hands of everyone there and chatted in a warm and friendly way. He joked about the movie "The Madness of King George" which had just come out and remarked that Americans were far too sensible ever to have a king. As far as I know, there has been no more pressure to sell or move the church since the visit of Prince Charles.

Q: So you got to meet the real Prince Charming! Casablanca must have been a hard act to follow. Where did you go after that?

Public Affairs Officer, Nicosia Cyprus 1996-1999

BAROODY: Our next post was Cyprus. The reason we ended up there was because we didn't get the post that we wanted, Kuwait, because for whatever reason, Ambassador Skip Gnehm did not give me agrément. Why he or anybody else had to give agrément to a Public Affairs Officer, I don't know. I was told to be patient, but then the incumbent decided to extend and I was bumped from this job four months before we were supposed to transfer. I had been paneled into that job for two years.

I didn't know what to do. All of a sudden, I didn't have a job. There I was in Morocco, in Casablanca, finishing up my tour and suddenly there was no onward assignment. So I sat down with some of my friends, Louise Taylor and Evelyn Early. We looked over the bid list and there was Cyprus.

I would never have considered Cyprus, because I started off with the intention of being an Arabist, serving in Arabic-speaking countries, and Kuwait was appealing. But it was not to be. We saw that a job in Cyprus as Public Affairs Officer was open.

The reason Cyprus was on the list so close to the time the job needed to be filled was because it did not require language training. On the island of Cyprus, the population in the southern part speaks Greek, and those in the northern part speak Turkish. USIA made the decision, although some of the other embassy jobs were language-designated for Greek or Turkish, the Public Affairs Officer position was not. So I qualified and got the job.

Just to set it up for people who may not know about Cyprus, it's in the eastern Mediterranean. On a good day you can see Israel from the eastern coast and on even a not so clear day you can see Turkey from the northern coast. So it's right there in the thick of things.

It's the perfect assignment for somebody who loves archaeology because every empire in that area, which was the cradle of civilization, marched through and landed on Cyprus and settled there for some period of time, only to be deposed or move on later.

We visited Neolithic settlements from 12,000 years ago on the very tip of the island in the north. The Greeks, Assyrians, Persians and Egyptians were there; the Romans were there. The Greeks and the Romans left behind a lot of artifacts and structures - mosaics, monasteries, temples, coliseums, amphitheaters.

French Lusignan Crusaders established strongholds in Cyprus; they built a network of castles across the island on three high points, two of which are still in beautiful condition. Then the Ottomans came and then the British. That led to the beginning of the current problems on Cyprus which have not been resolved. The British administered Cyprus beginning in 1878 and then annexed it in 1914. It was a Crown Colony until 1960.

Q: Why were the British interested in such a little island?

BAROODY: Because it was on the shipping route between the British Subcontinent – now known as South Central Asia - and Europe and the UK.

Q: You were there from when to when? And when you arrived, what was the political situation?

BAROODY: We were there from 1996 to 99. The political situation has not evolved in quite a long time. Cyprus is about the size of Connecticut, divided across the middle. There is a "Green Line" across the middle – a no man's land. About 20 percent of the population was Turkish Cypriot and 80 percent was Greek Cypriot. The total population was just over a million people.

Almost immediately after the British granted independence to Cyprus in 1960, there was conflict between the two communities - the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. By 1963, three years after independence, the fighting became so severe that the communities separated: the Turkish Cypriots moved north and the Greek Cypriots went south. On both sides, families gave up land and property they had held for generations.

Then the United Nations moved in, UNFICYP, the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, and it has been there since 1964. They patrol the United Nations buffer zone, the Green Line that divides the island.

At the time we arrived, in January 1996, no one was permitted to go back and forth from one side to the other, other than diplomats. My primary office was on the Greek Cypriot side in Nicosia, and I had a second office on the Turkish Cypriot side of Nicosia as well. I had staffs on both sides. It was a one-Public Diplomacy Officer post when I got there. I was the one American officer and I had local staffs on both sides: 10 Foreign Service Nationals on the Greek side and two on the Turkish Cypriot side.

I was the director of the American Center, a historic building on the Greek Cypriot side. It had been built about 100 years before out of mud brick during the time of the Ottomans, and it was owned by a Turkish Cypriot, even though it was on the Greek Cypriot side. That tells you something about how complicated land issues will be as part of the peace negotiations and why you may not want to invest in Cyprus property until they work it all out.

In addition, I was the embassy spokesperson dealing with the press. There was a considerable amount of press work because a lot was happening in Cyprus and the United States was involved in the peace negotiations.

Another demanding part of my portfolio was being Chairman of the Fulbright Board and supervisor of the Cyprus Fulbright Commission. That was a big job because it had the largest budget per capita of any Fulbright Commission in the world. We had a budget of over six million dollars per year in a country of about a million people.

Q: Why was there so much money?

BAROODY: It was because every year Senator Paul Sarbanes, who apparently had a special place in his heart for Cyprus, wrote a line item in the federal budget of 15 million dollars for Cyprus. Five million of that went to Fulbright, which also received additional money from investments and from the Government of Cyprus. So five million went to Fulbright, and 10 million went to a special fund that was administered by the Embassy for bicommunal reconciliation.

This was a lot of money to play with, so we could dream up and carry out ambitious projects. The other thing that was interesting about being the chairman of the Fulbright commission was that it was trinational: members included the United States, the Greek Cypriots, and the Turkish Cypriots. The Turkish Cypriots considered themselves citizens of a separate nation.

So I had to deal with the Greek Cypriot chairman, Lellos Demetriades, who was the mayor of Nicosia and a tough-talking lawyer, and the Turkish Cypriot chairman. Lellos would take a maximalist approach to negotiations, demanding the impossible and settling for the plausible. He was also warm and funny. He once told me, "We realized that Cyprus would never be a major power, so we decided to be a major nuisance instead."

I tried to mediate among all of them. It was actually a fairly congenial group because we all wanted the same thing, which was to find an equitable peace settlement and to provide academic opportunities for the young people of Cyprus, whatever their ethnicity.

There was a sense of hope at the time because Glafcos Clerides was the president of the Greek Cypriots and Rauf Denktash was the leader of the Turkish Cypriots. They understood each other. Both were lawyers and had argued against each other in a courtroom.

When I arrived, Richard Boucher was the ambassador. Imagine being the Public Affairs Officer for the longest-serving Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs in State Department history. In the first four months that I was there, I arranged 14 interviews for Ambassador Boucher, set up four news conferences, supported four VIP delegations that came to Cyprus, gave three speeches myself and drafted three for the ambassador. Alejandro Wolff was the Deputy Chief of Mission.

This time period also coincided with steep advances in information technology. The Internet was not available worldwide; it was still a new toy for a lot of people and it really did not exist on Cyprus. But one of the things we did was to create the first embassy website in Southern Europe to highlight embassy operations and let people know what we were doing.

I also set up news conferences for federal agencies other than the State Department. Cyprus was a medium-sized embassy, but it housed a lot of different agencies, such as

the Secret Service and Treasury. The year we first arrived, Treasury had just introduced a new $100 bill and we set up interviews to roll that out.

In terms of Fulbright, because we had so much money to play with, we had a dynamic operation. I supervised the first-rate Fulbright director, Daniel Hadjitoffi, and his 16-member staff. The first year I was there, we gave out 65 scholarships and 65 training opportunities, sending mid-level professionals for three weeks to the United States to learn about their fields and meet American counterparts.

Let me tell you about one of our Fulbright grantees. Years before I arrived, Turkish Cypriot Kemal Demirciler won a Fulbright scholarship to the University of Southern California. Celebrating at the beach, he dove off the shoulders of a friend into the Mediterranean, hitting the back of his neck. He nearly severed his spine and was paralyzed. It took seven years, but he was finally able to sit in a wheelchair and take up his scholarship. As a quadriplegic, he went to USC, graduated as University Valedictorian, and went on to get his PhD in Electrical Engineering. He is now conducting research at Eastern Mediterranean University and remains a friend and an inspiration.

We offered bi-communal cultural programs and workshops. Bringing the two sides together was, in reality, our only job - bicommunal reconciliation. One of the reasons it was such a high policy priority for the United States was because the Greek Cypriots were allied with Greece and the Turkish Cypriots were allied with Turkey, both of which were members of NATO. On a mile-by-mile basis, it was the most heavily militarized country in the world.

Yet in many ways, it was a perfect post: balmy weather, lovely people, easy communication because basically everybody spoke English, world-class beaches, irresistible cuisine. What made it even better was that Cyprus posed a problem that had the attention of Washington. It is gratifying to put in a call to the State Department - to your desk officer, to the area director - and get an immediate response because people consider your issue a priority. We had that advantage in Cyprus.

My job also included supporting the Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute – CAARI - which was part of a larger organization throughout the Middle East that supports archaeology. CAARI was a pleasure to work with because Cyprus had phenomenal archaeology. Excavators would come up with these incredible artifacts, such as statues of lions in pristine condition found in a synagogue that would have been built not too long after the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. The Cypriots are taking good care of the finds in terms of excavation and preservation.

But we mostly worked on bicommunal programs, supporting Cypriot NGOs and highlighting the advantages of choosing peace. Whether through a federal solution or another formula for governance, the Cypriots could improve their economy and make their homeland a safer place for future generations. We worked with advocacy groups, artists, architects, doctors. We sponsored the first meeting ever between Greek Cypriot

and Turkish Cypriot lawyers, since they in particular would have a lot of the work to do once a peace accord were reached.

Q: Did you find that the Embassy or the State Department had a bias and that one of the two sides of the Cyprus problem was being stubborn?

BAROODY: Both sides were stubborn because they had a lot at stake. The problem with finding a solution during our time there was that one side would be amenable to a settlement and the other would not. Then the other side would come around and want peace, and something would happen and the first side would not. So it was not that one side was being reasonable and the other was not; it was that they were never in a position to come to a peaceful reconciliation at the same time.

Q: You must have spent a lot of time trying to psychoanalyze these people.

BAROODY: We would try to figure out if it might have been more comfortable for the political leadership to stay with the status quo than come to a solution. I think that was really the question, despite the fact that the potential for live conflict was real because of the division of the island. Cypriots were not allowed to cross the Green Line from the Greek Cypriot side to the Turkish Cypriot side and vice versa.

In 1996, two people were killed at the checkpoint between the Greek Cypriot side and Turkish Cypriot side. It was the worst violence since 1974. There were occasional demonstrations along the Green Line. One time I had to request a UN military escort to retrieve a USIS speaker who was giving a presentation in Northern Cyprus when demonstrations broke out.

We promoted federalism; we promoted economic integration. We convinced Cyprus' only think-tank to host a conference on elements that would make up the Cyprus settlement.

But we offered more traditional Public Diplomacy programming too. For example, we hosted concerts on both sides of the Green Line. In Northern Cyprus we gave concerts in a venue called Bellapais Abbey. It was the remnants of a monastery built in the 13th century on a plateau with a view of the Mediterranean. Lawrence Durrell, who wrote "Bitter Lemons" about Cyprus, lived in the village of Bellapais. The abbey had splendid acoustics and views of the sun setting over the sea.

Among the artists who performed there were a duo we brought in named Stephen Swedish and André Emelianoff. André played the cello and Stephen played the piano. They were great, but it was as if the cosmos objected to their coming to Cyprus.

We had put them up in the Holiday Inn in Nicosia. Two hours after they arrived on October 9, 1996, we had an earthquake of 6.4 magnitude, with an epicenter 40 miles off the southwest coast. It was a big one: 130 people were injured, buildings were damaged, and rockslides covered roads. I had not experienced an earthquake before.

The Cypriots that I worked with knew what was happening. I remember standing behind my desk, and I heard what I thought was a truck rumbling nearby, a big truck on the road next to us. It got louder and I thought it must be a low-flying jet. Then one of my staff members ran in and said, “we're having an earthquake!”

I said, “Everybody get out!” So we ran out of the building and just stood there. It went on for more than 60 seconds. Everything shook and then it stopped. I was astonished because I'd never been through that before. An interesting side note was that the embassy was relatively new - an Inman Building a couple of miles from the American Center where we worked. The embassy had been built to withstand earthquakes because of Cyprus being a seismic zone.

In spite of that, five cracks were detected in the embassy structure after the earthquake. But in the American Center there were no cracks at all, no damage to this century-old Ottoman building made out of mud brick. I think they must have known something about earthquakes back when they built it.

So when I walked over to the hotel to brief the Swedish and Emelianoff duo, there was an aftershock, about five on the Richter scale. The crystals in the chandeliers in the lobby of the hotel were jangling and we all ran out of the building. Nothing fell down, but Swedish and Emelianoff took it all in stride.

Good thing they were easy-going. Their first concert at the Ambassador’s residence was preceded by a freak storm in which horizontal lightning streaked across the twilight skies, walnut-sized hail pocked the landscape and the first rain of the season escalated into a torrent, followed by flash flooding. Nonetheless, the audience showed up for the dinner and music, including President Glafcos Clerides and his family.

Their second concert was in the coastal city of Larnaca at a banquet sponsored by the Cyprus-American Association. By this point, there had been 300 aftershocks from that huge earthquake, and the Cypriots were so jittery they closed schools for the rest of the week.

There was a solar eclipse before their final concert at Bellapais. 350 Cypriots showed up, and enjoyed the music so much they gave Swedish and Emelianoff thunderous applause and a standing ovation. Earthquakes, thunderstorms, floods, eclipses - whatever the weather, it was a great success.

We did as much as we could to bring people together. For example, we had a bicommunal photo exhibit in which we encouraged Greek Cypriot photographers and Turkish Cypriot photographers to work together and put together a show. It was presented on both the Greek Cypriot side and the Turkish Cypriot side. There are some deeply gifted photographers on both sides, notably George Vass and Kadir Kaba, so it was a memorable exhibition.

Whenever we selected International Visitors (IVs) - in which we invited Cypriots for a program that brought them on a fully-funded trip to the United States to learn about our country and some aspect of their profession or avocation – we would identify one Greek Cypriot and one Turkish Cypriot for each program. We would insist that they travel together to the United States.

We very seldom got a "no" because, after all, it's a free trip to the United States and IVs are treated well and introduced to valuable contacts. So almost no one said "No, I'm not going to travel with a Greek Cypriot or a Turkish Cypriot." Then they got to know each other.

One time we had a program that lasted for a month on various aspects of press freedom and press ethics. Two weeks after it ended, the Greek Cypriot Journalists Union passed their first code of ethics - a real achievement.

In another case, we had the opportunity to send a Turkish Cypriot to the United States to study museum management and protection of archaeological finds. There are unique ancient sites in Northern Cyprus and many have not been excavated.

So we sent this gentleman to the United States to study how to set up and administer museums - proper lighting, security, storing archives in the proper humidity and that kind of thing. When he came back, I asked him, "What was the most surprising thing you learned about the United States?" You always debrief these visitors when they come back and then you send in a report.

He said, "Well, I was very surprised to learn that the military did not run the United States."

I said, "You thought the military ran the United States?"

"Yes, that was the impression that I had, and I was very surprised to learn that it was not true," he replied.

I said, "I'm glad you figured that out. Anything else?"

He said, "Yes. I was sitting in a park, and I was by myself, and this animal started to approach me. It came closer and closer. It was something I'd never seen before. It came right up to me."

I said, "What do you think it was?"

He said, "I think it was called a squirrel."

He had never seen one before because they don't have much wildlife in Cyprus; hunters put an end to them. So the squirrel encounter was a revelation.

When you do these International Visitor debriefs, you hear the most unexpected things. Visitors are surprised that the United States is so big and its population so diverse. We always make sure on these International Visitor programs that after they come to Washington and New York, they go to smaller cities - Sioux City or Seattle or Albuquerque - to get a sense of the variety of life in others parts of the United States.

Q: But most of your work was trying to bring the two sides together?

BAROODY: That's correct, and we tried everything under the sun to do it. This was early in the days of computer technology, so we installed Internet on both the Greek Cypriot side and the Turkish Cypriot side so that the Cypriots could talk to each other electronically even when the Green Line was closed. We called it "Technology for Peace."

Public diplomacy programs complemented the work of the embassy's Front Office and the political section. Heavy-hitters from Washington weighed in. We had two visits by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. We also had visits by Richard Holbrooke. He had been named Special Envoy for Cyprus and he came three times. He used his legendary negotiating skills to try to bring Greek Cypriot President Clerides and Turkish Cypriot President Denktash together.

My job was to support the media aspects of these missions with news conferences, interviews and press releases. Once when Holbrooke decided to hold an impromptu news conference, we assembled the reporters, but there was a problem: Holbrooke wasn't wearing a tie and didn't want to appear on camera without one. He borrowed a tie from my husband.

After three visits, Ambassador Holbrooke seems to have come to the conclusion that the two sides were not ready for peace. Either he resigned from that assignment or decided to focus on other hotspots, because he didn't come back after that.

Q: What was your greatest achievement in Cyprus?

BAROODY: We were determined to bring people together but we didn't have a dedicated place where both sides could meet, so I oversaw construction of a building, the Fulbright Center, inside the buffer zone. We had to under overcome all kinds of problems to get it accomplished: there were legal disputes, the architects couldn't get along with each other, and the UN didn't really want it. There was even a motion in the Greek Cypriot Parliament to declare it illegal.

I had to get approval from the Agency for International Development (USAID) for the funding, furnishings and landscaping. It was a struggle, but in the end we dedicated a Fulbright Center which is still operational to this day. The Fulbright Board meets there, Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot counterparts have a place to get together and it provides space for exhibits.

We agreed to demolish it when a peace agreement is reached in Cyprus. I'm sorry to say the Fulbright Center in the Buffer Zone is still standing. But the building opened in June 1997 and remains tangible evidence of our commitment to helping the Cypriots find a just solution to the division of the island.

After Ambassador Boucher left Nicosia for Hong Kong, we had a new ambassador, Ken Brill. He continued the work of trying to reconcile the two sides. The political situation was becoming tense, so our advocacy for a peaceful solution was becoming more urgent. If the two sides had gone to war, it would have brought about the first intra-NATO conflict.

Q: Was the work any different with the new ambassador? Any new opportunities?

BAROODY: One of the unexpected consequences of getting a new ambassador was a terrific new opportunity for my husband to contribute to the mission of the embassy. Dick was the "trailing spouse" – one of the delightful terms Human Resources came up with for the wives or husbands of Foreign Service Officers at post. He had retired from the Air Force and when we served in Morocco, the Diplomatic Security Engineering Services Center hired him.

When we transferred to Cyprus, he didn't have a job. Now, Dick is a resourceful guy with great credentials, so he found employment as a Political Science professor at Intercollege, which later became Nicosia International University. As such, he was required to give a public lecture once a semester.

Meanwhile, as part of my orientation to be the Public Affairs Officer in Cyprus, I was directed to travel to Ankara and Istanbul in Turkey and then to Athens, Greece, on consultations to get a clear understanding of the regional political context of our work.

It seemed like a great opportunity, so we paid travel costs out of pocket for my husband to go with me. While I was consulting with the Public Affairs Officers in these places and meeting with the ambassador, Dick went over to the Defense Attaché's Office. He told them he had to give a public lecture, and decided his topic would be the "Balance of Power between Greece and Turkey and the Military Impact on Cyprus."

We both gathered a lot of information. When we went to Athens, through luck of timing, Dick was able to attend a bi-annual international defense trade show called the "Defendory" and see all the guns and toys the Greeks had on display and gather copious data for his briefing.

When we returned, I was sitting in the Country Team meeting on November 12 with Ambassador Brill. At the end of the meeting, I happened to mention "If anybody's interested, my husband's giving a lecture on Monday night at Intercollege on the relative military capabilities of Greece and Turkey."

The ambassador looked shocked.

He said, “What are you talking about? Has he cleared this speech with the embassy?”

I said, “Sir, he doesn't work for the embassy.”

In two weeks Dick had a job at the embassy as “Special Assistant to the Ambassador for Bicommunal Affairs” with an annual budget of about a million dollars to spend on bicommunal projects.

Q: What kind of things did he do?

BAROODY: He came up with creative ideas and made them work. Dick was able to set up a bicommunal fair in the Buffer Zone on the grounds of the Ledra Palace that brought together 2000 Cypriots on September 27, 1997. The Ledra Palace was once an elegant hotel. By 1997 it was rundown, basically barracks for the United Nations, but it still had a nice ballroom and extensive grounds where they hosted events.

So Dick, coordinating with USIS, the Cyprus Fulbright Commission and several other embassies, under the auspices of the United Nations, organized this huge fair. The goal was to inform Cypriots about the breadth of bicommunal activities going on and to encourage them to join in. It was scheduled to begin at 4:00 in the afternoon, but we had to get underway at 3:00 because so many Cypriots had arrived in advance. Twenty-two bicommunal action groups – teachers, lawyers, environmentalists – set up booths and handed out leaflets about their projects.

The foreign missions in Cyprus all supported the fair. The ambassadors of the embassies of the UK, Israel, France, Germany, Switzerland, Slovakia, India, and of course the U.S. all showed up. We divided up the costs and work. The Swiss paid for the food, the Germans and Australians supplied beer and the French and Italians brought wine.

The U.S. supplied the organization, logistics, entertainment and sound system. We had Greek Cypriot folk music and Turkish Cypriot pop played by bands from both communities, traditional songs by a bicommunal choir and folkloric dancing – bouzoukis and drums. We set up a wall-sized canvas and provided watercolors for participants to express their feelings about the event. Children handed out carnations to their counterparts from across the Green Line.

On the morning of the fair, it started to drizzle - this, at a time of drought. This festival was supposed to start at 4:00. By 10:00 o'clock, it was a torrent. We had worked on this thing for so long, and we thought, “Nobody's going to come.”

But in spite of the rain, people began pouring in, first from the Turkish Cypriot side and then from the Greek Cypriot side. By the end we had a couple of thousand people there in the rain, enjoying hot dogs and pony rides. People were so happy to be with their families and meet with Cypriots from the other side. We were singing and mingling in the rain.

Cypriot and Turkish TV and print media covered the fair and the Voice of America featured a story about it on VOA's Greek and Turkish services. The rain let up an hour before the end of the fair, giving way to a cool, clear evening. Someone said, "We need rain for a good harvest. We need peace for prosperity." It was an iconic event, one that started a tradition that has continued to this day.

Another multinational project was a conference for Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). We brought together the United States, Greece, Turkey and Cyprus to talk about NGO work. There were 100 delegates for that meeting.

Christina Hadjiparaskeva was my chief FSN at the American Center. Working with her was like – as the saying goes - dancing with Fred Astaire. She could make anybody look great.

Q: Did all that work make a difference in terms of solving the division?

BAROODY: Yes. Even though we didn't solve the division of Cyprus, we did move things forward, particularly among the general population, but also with the leadership. Soon after our tour of duty was up, Turkish Cypriot leader Denktash eased travel restrictions so that Turkish Cypriots could cross the Green Line and enter into the Greek Cypriot zone.

That was an enormous step forward; it opened up a lot of doors. For one thing, hundreds of Turkish Cypriots began to commute to the Greek Cypriot side to work because the economy on the Turkish Cypriot side was smaller and job opportunities fewer than on the Greek Cypriot side.

Q: Did your bicommunal projects leave time for more traditional public diplomacy?

BAROODY: Sure. Looking at our library operations, for example, we recognized that this was the new era of the Internet, so we turned our library into a computer-based Information Resource Center. Books were expensive; they had to be transported onto the island, with heavy freight charges. The Internet solved that problem.

We realized that if we could persuade the libraries with English-language holdings in Cyprus to band together, they could purchase databases from the United States that would exponentially increase the amount of information that was available to researchers. So that's what we did.

The USIS Nicosia librarian, Dorothy Akkidou, and I were able to persuade twelve libraries to work together with us to purchase these databases. You'd go into the universities across the Greek Cypriot side and see the American databases being used for scholarly research. That was a big achievement.

Q: How did you find things development-wise? Was there a difference between the Greek and the Turkish sides?

BAROODY: In many ways, they were about the same. It was a very literate country – highly-educated population, good quality of living. All the indicators in terms of health and infant survival rates were good, and once computers were introduced, Cypriots quickly rose up the ranks of computer literacy. The educational systems on both sides were sound.

One of the concerns on the Turkish Cypriot side was that it was hard for secondary school graduates to get into Turkish universities. Because of the way the educational system was set up in Turkey, a lot of students who were qualified in terms of grades and test scores couldn't get admitted into Turkish universities. That was also true of students in Turkey itself.

So entrepreneurs started setting up universities in Northern Cyprus. There were seven or eight universities for a population of about 200,000. The classes were taught in English, and schools accepted applicants from Turkey and other parts of the world, including the Middle East and Africa. Girne International University was one of the bigger institutions.

The Turkish Cypriot economy was much smaller than the Greek Cypriot economy. The Greek Cypriot economy at that time was the fourteenth wealthiest in the world, and the fourth wealthiest in Europe. They were doing well financially despite the fact that by 1997 they had been in a drought for four years, which was killing off the olive orchards and affecting the citrus crops.

The Greek Cypriots sent their children to the United States or Greece for university studies, but Intercollege, a Cypriot university in Nicosia, had recently been established, so things were gearing up on that plane.

Q: Was there a lot of personal animosity between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots?

BAROODY: There were grievances and memories of past tragic losses on both sides – family members killed in violence were remembered and mourned. But I didn't detect the deep-seated animosity among most Cypriots on either side that I sensed when I served in Syria and Israel.

But there had been an increasing population transfer between Northern Cyprus and Turkey for jobs and economic opportunities. This added another complication to the search for a peaceful and fair settlement.

Q: You were really the point of the spear of American foreign policy, I'd like to think.

BAROODY: My job as Public Affairs Officer was not so much to get the big guys to talk to each other, although I was familiar with the President on the Greek Cypriot side. We worked quite a bit with President Clerides and his daughter Katie, a peace activist and politician. As for Turkish Cypriot leader Denktash, we met and talked face-to-face. Both Clerides and Denktash were accessible, approachable people. But it was more the mission

of the ambassador and the political officers to deal with the heads of state on policy matters.

My job was to prepare the populations for peace. Public Affairs offices work more with people face-to-face, especially with centers of influence such as educators and journalists. Our job was to try to build grassroots support on both sides for reconciliation so that when the political decision-makers finally came to a peaceful solution, the populations would be ready to accept it. That's one of the reasons we emphasized communication and established Internet connections, to diminish the sense of "otherness" between the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots.

Another thing we did to bring people together was to organize "field trips." We put a group of Greek Cypriots on a bus and drove them up to Northern Cyprus. It was the first time in decades these people had been given the opportunity to cross through the Buffer Zone. It allowed them to see for themselves what used to be a major port city of Kyrenia, now renamed Girne. In some cases they were able to see their old family homes. It broke down a lot of barriers.

We brought in scholars such as Daniel Elazar, who was with the Temple University Center for the Study of Federalism, to brainstorm about possible solutions: do you want two states? Do you want a Switzerland-type country with different cantons? Do you want one state in which the two sides have more autonomy? We sponsored a trip to Dr. Elazar's Center in Philadelphia for a bicommunal group of senior Cypriot political leaders to follow up the discussions, and later took them to his Center in Jerusalem.

We sent Cypriot kids from both sides to summer camp together in the U.S., to Maine and to Vermont. We brought in the "Apple Hill Players," a concert group that plays in conflicted areas such as Israel and the Palestinian area. They perform and give scholarships to the children in these troubled regions to come and study music in the United States.

Q: When you left Cyprus, did you feel that things would change very much?

BAROODY: We were hopeful. We thought that because communications were getting better and decision-makers were actively negotiating, there was hope for peace, not just in Cyprus but in other parts of the world. Northern Ireland, for example, was coming to a peaceful reconciliation, so that was a good model. There was hope for resolution between the Israelis and Palestinians.

There was a sense of optimism, and because we had these tools to work with, we were able to take tangible steps forward - to introduce individuals to each other, to introduce communities and professional groups to each other and help them begin a dialogue.

Q: Wasn't there a vote on something to deal with Cyprus, on joining together?

BAROODY: There have been referenda over the years, and there was debate about Cyprus being admitted into the European Union. Some considered it a set-back when the Greek Cypriot part of Cyprus was invited to join the European Union. The hope had been that a united Cyprus would be accepted into the EU as a whole, and this would provide an incentive for the two sides to get together. But the Greek Cypriot side was accepted by itself, with the idea that the Turkish Cypriots would eventually enter the EU as well.

Q: Also, the Russians were active there. There was a threat at one point that the Russians were going to bring in missiles, S-300 missiles to Cyprus, and I think that they were dissuaded from doing that.

BAROODY: Russians used their influence to foment political turbulence, some targeting the U.S. There's the Russia-Cyprus-Greek-Serbian Orthodox connection to consider. Because of a NATO bombing of Serbia, Greek Cypriots staged 54 demonstrations against the U.S. Embassy in five weeks. The Greek Cypriot schools let out early so the kids could come and protest in front of the embassy, shouting and throwing eggs at the outer wall.

The American Center was separated from the embassy by about a mile, in this two-story mud brick building with a mud brick wall around it. The American flag flew in the courtyard. During one of these demonstrations, people started climbing over the wall and tore down the flag. I darted out, retrieved it and brought it inside.

Q: I couldn't help but recall an American ambassador being killed in Cyprus.

BAROODY: That was in 1974. Ambassador Roger Davies was killed in August, 1974. He was shot during a demonstration outside the embassy. A Greek Cypriot crowd was protesting what they perceived to be the U.S. failure to stop the Turkish invasion of the island. Ambassador Davies and a Greek Cypriot secretary, Antoinette Varnavas, were killed by what was said to be sniper fire. It was such a tragedy: his wife had died the year before, and they left behind two children. Many don't realize that Davies was one of eight U.S. ambassadors who have died in the line of duty.

Q: Are there a lot of British people there?

BAROODY: Not so many residents, but a fair number of tourists and the military. There are still two Sovereign British military bases in Cyprus, Akrotiri and Dhekelia, which are British overseas territories.

Q: Do you think much has changed since you left?

BAROODY: When we were there, Cyprus was getting fifteen million dollars a year from the United States in the annual budget. Senator Sarbanes, who had been a Congressman from Maryland from 1971-1977 and then a Senator from 1977-2007, left office. That generous line item disappeared, so they closed the American Center and the Fulbright office, downsized the staff and integrated the Public Affairs section into the embassy.

When people ask me to name my favorite overseas assignment, I tell them Cyprus – "Paradise with a Problem." Dick and I enjoyed three memorable years there, I was promoted, and received what might have been the last Superior Honor Award given by the United States Information Agency before it was abolished.

We've stayed in touch with friends from both the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities and cherish those friendships. Every officer arriving in Nicosia thinks the two sides are going to come to peace during their time at post. I hope and pray there will soon be peaceful reconciliation in Cyprus and a just resolution to the division of the island.

National War College, 1999-2000

Q: So today is May 26. Where are we? We are in the year 1999-2000 and you have come back from Cyprus and are going to the National War College.

BAROODY: I was one of 17 Foreign Service officers in a class of 194 students, most of whom were in the military. At the time I was an FSO-1 officer, close in rank to the military officers who entered at the same time, colonels and lieutenant colonels. This was an opportunity not only to go to school but to get paid for it, with books and tuition included. You get a Master's Degree in National Security Strategy at the end of the year.

I was very impressed with many of the military officers in my class. Some have gone on to distinguished careers, and the same is true of the Foreign Service people. As a student you are assigned to a homeroom at the National War College (NWC), so you tend to get to know the 20 or so people who are in your homeroom.

You have a desk and carrel, a place to keep your books and somewhere to hang out between classes. One of the people in my homeroom was John Fox, another Foreign Service Officer, one of the best writers I've ever encountered. He won almost every writing award that year.

The National War College is part of the National Defense University (NDU), located at Ft. McNair in Southwest Washington between the Wharf and the Washington Nationals Stadium. There are a number of other institutions at NDU, including what was then called the Industrial College of the Armed Forces or ICAF, now known as The Eisenhower School. There's the Joint Forces Staff College, the College of Information and Cyberspace, and several research centers.

I ended up commuting to the War College with a couple of other people, an Army helicopter pilot named Nicky Knighton and a naval officer named Chip Fowler. We all have remained friends. A nice story about Chip, a single guy, was that after commuting together for a year, we got to know each other well. I knew somebody in the Foreign Service that I thought he would like.

So I said, “Chip, I'd like for you to meet this woman because I think you'd get along really well.”

And he said, “I'm in a relationship right now and I'm not really looking.”

Two years later, we happened to bump into each other at a reception. He said, “You remember you told me about somebody that you thought I ought to meet? Could you set something up?”

I said, “I'll see if she's available.” As luck would have it, she was free.

So my husband and I set up a blind date in Old Town Alexandria for them at brunch. Ten months later Chip Fowler and Val Crites were married. That was ten years ago, and they are now living in Sydney, Australia, where she is the Consul General.

That was one of my happy memories of the War College; there are a lot of them. My perspective on the military may be colored by the fact that my husband is a retired Air Force officer. I've always been kindly disposed toward the armed forces.

I've always thought it was important for the State Department and the military to work closely together. After all, the ultimate goal for both institutions is national security. We almost take this for granted now in the wake of Afghanistan and Iraq, but at the time it was not as evident. I had written my dissertation about the military, so I had that other connection.

One of the things that impressed me about the National War College was the stringency of the academic requirements. There was a lot of reading to do and papers to write. The quality of the instructors was first-rate, both military and civilian. They were encouraging, especially when it came to writing and research.

The National Defense University is at Fort Lesley J. McNair, at the confluence of the Potomac and Anacostia rivers. It was built in 1791 and has been an Army post for over two centuries. It has an interesting history: it’s where the people accused of conspiring to assassinate President Lincoln were imprisoned and four were hanged, including a woman, Mary Surratt.

It was named for General McNair, an Army officer who was killed in action during World War II. Dick and I visited his grave at the Normandy American cemetery and dusted it off, a military tradition. There are residences for high-ranking military officers and their families along the river and an Officers Club, where we would sometimes treat ourselves to lunch. The War College is located in Roosevelt Hall. George Kennan gave lectures and produced analyses while at the War College that provided the underpinning of the “Containment Theory” that shaped U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

Q: I understand that War College students have great field trips.

BAROODY: Students at NWC had terrific opportunities to travel. I chose to go with the group headed to Thailand, an area of the world I thought I'd never see otherwise, not being an "Asia hand." We went to Bangkok, then to Chiang Mai.

Q: We'd pulled out of Chiang Mai by that time, but we once had a major airbase there.

BAROODY: The air base was gone by the time we visited. Our group visited the consulate, small but strategic. Then we went to Kuala Lumpur, Hong Kong and Singapore.

War College students also traveled within the United States. On one trip, we went to Las Vegas and stayed at a Motel 6. The best part of the trip for me was going to Nellis Air Force Base where they had the "Petting Zoo," a display of Soviet military equipment that had been captured over the years, MiGs and Sukhoi aircraft, SA-2 missiles.

As we were flying in to one of the U.S. bases we were visiting, we saw that someone had put up a sign: "Welcome National Treasures." We started calling ourselves "the National Treasures" after that and continue to do so to this day.

Q: Were you able to incorporate some aspects of your public diplomacy work into your studies?

BAROODY: As a student at the War College, I had a chance to explore a topic that has long been of interest - how the military conducts public affairs. I had studied military public affairs previously and written about it in my dissertation. I concluded that the Army had not evolved much in terms of dealing with the media. They still suffered from the "Vietnam Syndrome," a wariness of the press. The conventional wisdom was that the press had contributed to the loss of the Vietnam War by leading public opinion to oppose the war. Subsequent studies have shown that public opinion changed first and coverage followed.

As a War College student, I also learned that there are considerable differences in the corporate cultures of the military and the Foreign Service. Sometimes I learned the hard way. In the military being on time means being early. If you're supposed to be there at 10 o'clock, you want to be there at 9:45. If you're there at 10 o'clock, you're late. Now I'm the one who leaves for the airport an hour before anybody else.

Another thing that impressed me about the academic program at the War College was that it wasn't about how to conduct war. It was about how to think strategically, how to think in a way that allows you to make good decisions. There was an emphasis on epistemology, understanding how you know what it is you think you know, and understanding what influences your decision-making. That is a critical skill for any leader, understanding and questioning your underlying assumptions.

We looked at the great thinkers: Sun Tzu and von Clausewitz - that's predictable - but we also looked at others, such as Henry Kissinger. The curriculum emphasized civilian primacy over the military: the military does not run the United States, the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches do. If you go to an embassy abroad, it's the Ambassador who is in charge. It was useful for the military officers to have exposure to State Department officers in this setting and to hear from us the kind of work we did.

The topic that interested me the most was the growth of corporate defense. I wrote seven chapters of a book about private military corporations while I was at NWC. Blackwater was in the news then, and MPRI - Military Professional Resources International – a local company in Alexandria.
A number of private organizations were popping up to provide defense services. There is a fine line between mercenaries and private military institutions.

I wish I had finished the book and gotten it published because that was the right moment for that subject. When I was serving in Iraq later, 2008-2009, fifty percent of the people there were contractors. Military contracting had become a way of life. Kellogg, Brown and Root was everywhere. Even though I didn't finish writing the book, the time I spent on it wasn't a total loss. I did win a certificate of recognition from the War College for my research project, "The Commerce of Combat: Mercenaries, Contractors and Twenty-First Century Warfare," and the Colonel Higgins Award for Excellence in Writing for "The Role of Corporate Defense Services in International Security Strategy."

Q: You were at the National War College the year that the United States Information Agency was abolished, on October 1, 1999, and its functions were folded into the State Department. You were one of about a thousand FSOs at USIA. Did the consolidation affect the way you were able to do business?

BARODY: When USIA was folded into the State Department, we lost a lot of assets. For example, when I was in Casablanca, I had a car and driver. That was essential because my job was to get out there and talk to people, and driving in Casablanca is a huge hassle. Parking in Casablanca is even worse. So it was helpful having that resource.

Once the State Department took over public diplomacy, Public Affairs Officers no longer had designated drivers. We also lost a chunk of our budgets and personnel. In some places, General Services Officers swooped in and took the china out of our cabinets that had been bought under USIA auspices. We lost the funds that had previously been allocated for household staff for officers with representational responsibilities, and we lost the housing appropriate for representation. We had been told before consolidation that we wouldn't lose assets; it "wasn't about the money."

A number of USIA officers - senior FSOs in particular - who saw the consolidation coming, retired just before October 1999 so they wouldn't have to serve in the State Department. It was such a different corporate culture. For one thing, USIA was small. We knew each other. We were chosen to be collegial; that's part of what we do - make friends, network and get to know people. So we were generally friendly folks who knew

each other and were not all vying to become ambassadors. We moved from that atmosphere into the State Department, which was less collegial, more competitive.

On the positive side, the consolidation opened up opportunities for Public Diplomacy officers to do other types of work. A number of USIA officers went on to become ambassadors. I took advantage of many opportunities that would not have been available otherwise and it enriched the variety and challenges of my career.

Deputy Director and Director of the Office of Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs 2000-2002

Q: So you graduated from the War College and came back to the State Department?

BAROODY: Yes. I was assigned to the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, first as Deputy Director of the Office of Press and Public Diplomacy (NEA/PPD), then as Director.

It was a new office, still developing. It was the year after the United States Information Agency had been abolished and the public diplomacy function was rolled into the State Department. So it was the first time there had been a consolidated USIA office with the State Department *and* the first time the public diplomacy function had been consolidated with public affairs.

It was a massive amount of work, managing both public diplomacy and public affairs for NEA. The job of the Public Affairs Bureau is to explain the Administration's foreign policy with American audiences largely in mind. Public diplomacy is geared toward foreign audiences. It's more about "telling America's story to the world" and "making friends for America," as our mission statements used to say.

By law, public diplomacy offices are not allowed to distribute any kind of information product, including videos and publications, within the United States. So my job was to deal with both aspects, although as deputy director I pretty much stayed with public diplomacy. My boss, NEA/PPD Director Dan Sreebny, dealt with the NEA Front Office and with the public affairs part of the portfolio.

As Deputy Director, I had oversight for 41 NEA public diplomacy officers overseas. In the Washington office, I directly supervised four Foreign Service Officers and a secretary, and managed a budget of ten point six million dollars.

A lot of my work involved dealing with personnel issues, making sure the jobs were filled at all our posts, which was not easy in the Middle East at that time. People didn't want to go there. The security situation in the region was turbulent, and there wasn't the same sense of glory about serving in areas of unpredictable violence and danger that there is now.

If you serve in the Middle East these days, particularly in some of the really tough posts, you get a lot of respect within State. You also have a greater possibility of getting

promoted and to be selected for highly-competed follow-on assignments. There were fewer incentives back then to risk your life and live apart from your family to serve in dangerous posts.

Q: Besides the management issues, were you able to start any new initiatives in public diplomacy?

BAROODY: We were preoccupied with Saddam Hussein in the years 2000-2001, so one of the things we did was create a "Rapid Response Report" to counter Iraqi propaganda. The Iraqis were putting out a lot of disinformation and we were countering it with facts that could be independently verified. I pulled together a team of ten public diplomacy and political officers to generate this product every day and set up media interviews and speeches to get the word out about U.S. policy in Iraq. We also set up a website to counter Iraqi disinformation.

On the cultural side, I took the initiative to reaffirm ties between the State Department and the academic community. USIA had always worked closely with academia but after it was abolished there was a perception among scholars that the U.S. government would no longer do the kind of educational exchanges that had been done by USIA.

USIA used to send a lot of scholars overseas to do lectures and seminars and panels, and there was the expectation that we wouldn't do that anymore. We also had published journals such as "Problems of Communism" which predicted the fall of the Soviet Union before other analysts picked up on the internal economic and political weaknesses that led to its dissolution.

To counter the notion that State public diplomacy wouldn't be doing this kind of work anymore, I worked with my staff to organize a public diplomacy conference to bring 100 Washington area academics together with public diplomacy staff to hear about the work that we were continuing to do at the State Department.

We also reached out to the field. This was a beginning of a new era in communications technology, including Digital Video Conferencing, which was particularly useful. When you have FSOs overseas who don't have easy access to people in the NEA Front Office, a DVC is very useful. So we created a space within the NEA PD office suite just for Digital Video Conferencing.

I was selected to move from Deputy Director to the Director of NEA Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy. It was a stretch for me - it was actually a "double stretch," I was an FSO-1 at that time and the position was ranked for a Minister-Counselor.

To make it much tougher, that was the year of 9/11, which had a profound influence on U.S. relations with the Middle East. I came into the Director's job in June 2001. On September 11th of that year, Deputy Assistant Secretary Jim Larocco, to whom I reported, came into my office in the State Department, across the hall from the NEA Front Office.

I had the television on in my office, and we saw the news report that a plane had flown into one of the buildings of the World Trade Center. He and I were standing there watching it in shock, lamenting that this terrible accident had occurred. Then we saw the second one fly into the other tower and knew it was not an accident.

9/11 was a day of chaos. No one knew what was happening. It *was* clear that New York had been attacked. There were rumors that the White House was going to be attacked, and then another plane flew into the Pentagon at the D and the E rings. Cell phones didn't work; I couldn't reach my husband who was in South Dakota at a business conference.

There were conflicting announcements over the State Department loudspeakers: "If you are parked in the State Department, leave your car here and depart the building." Being an Office Director, I had a parking spot in the garage. Then they said, "If you are parked in the garage, take your car and leave immediately." Nobody knew what was going on.

We thought the White House was going to be attacked. People were also saying there had been a car bomb explosion two blocks away, neither of which turned out to be true. Meanwhile, stoplights were not working; people were driving over median strips, trying to get out of the city. Of course, with the city of Washington being surrounded by bridges and so many people trying to leave at the same time, traffic was in gridlock.

After consulting with the NEA Front Office, I left. It took three hours to get home. I remember crossing the bridge onto 295 South near Bolling Air Force Base, being stuck there, looking through the passenger's window and watching smoke rising from the Pentagon. It was an unusually clear day with temperatures in the 80s. It felt hotter in the greenhouse of my car with sun beating on the windows and smoke filling the skies as I sat there, unable to move.

The aftermath of 9/11 monopolized the rest of the year. We were the ones who were attacked, yet after an initial wave of sympathy for the United States, public sentiment in the Middle East turned against us when we began to retaliate against Al Qaeda training camps and military installations.

9/11 made our jobs much harder. I would be called in to the State Department after midnight to draft and clear interagency guidance to our field posts about our military response. I coordinated with the Department of Defense and the National Security Council to cobble together point-by-point statements explaining our right to defend ourselves and the need for other nations to join with the United States in a coalition against terror.

We sent the guidance and talking points out to the embassies, then over the next several weeks I was called in to act as coordinator of the Crisis Task Force that NEA led in the Operations Center.

Even with all the action going on at the State Department, my highest priority was making sure our field posts were taken care of. These were 19 posts in a part of the world where security risks had suddenly ratcheted up, so I made a point of strengthening communication between Washington and the embassies.

One way of reaching out was through organizing an NEA Public Affairs Officer conference in London to bring field officers together for the first time in a couple of years to meet each other, to talk about their experiences, and to get to know the new leadership in the Office of Near Eastern Affairs at the State Department.

Bill Burns was the Assistant Secretary, and the field officers needed to meet Deputy Assistant Secretary Jim Larocco, who handled the public affairs/public diplomacy portfolio for the Bureau. We needed to emphasize to the PD officers at our embassies that they had support at the State Department. It was equally important for the people in Washington to meet the public diplomacy people on the front lines, to get to know them and put faces with names.

Q: Did people in the Middle East think the bombing of the Twin Towers was basically an American plot?

BARODY: Conspiracy theories are always abundant in the Middle East, particularly among people who have an anti-American bias to begin with, but for better-educated people, those in positions to make a difference, that wasn't an issue.

Public approval of the U.S. in the Middle East dropped to historic lows. Part of it was because the people who had perpetrated this attack on the United States were putting out their own propaganda, fomenting the idea that the United States was to blame for the ills of the world. That made it tough.

We did everything we could to counter the view that the U.S. was anti-Arab or anti-Islamic. Two weeks after the 9/11 attacks, working with the University of Maryland, we brought together 40 American graduate students with 40 students from the Middle East and hosted a televised colloquium to talk about U.S. and Middle Eastern perceptions. It was such a success that it was broadcast on "Nightline" and reported in the international media. The Arab students were interviewed live on "Al-Jazeera" and projected a positive image to audiences in the Middle East.

We also created mass advocacy tools to improve "Arab street" opinion of the U.S., such as posters on "Mosques in America" to emphasize the freedom of American Muslims to worship openly. One of the misconceptions was that the Islamic population in the United States was marginalized.

So we created and disseminated thousands of posters to emphasize the freedom of American Muslims to worship freely. We edited and published a pamphlet about the network of terrorism, tying Osama bin Laden to the 9/11 attacks, and sent out audio tapes featuring interviews with Muslim clerics condemning the attacks.

We also persuaded our own high-level officers in the region - ambassadors, DCMs, senior political officers - to talk to the Arab media and get the word out about U.S. policies. We really had to push them to give interviews to the press and go on television and radio. With the backing of the NEA front office, we said, "You speak Arabic; you know policy. Get out there and talk."

Ambassadors and others in the embassies had given almost no interviews before. Within three months after we started this push, they had done over a hundred - they got the word out. Public speaking is a part of the job that terrifies some officers, but it's vital in a crisis to clarify U.S. policies overseas. The State Department now offers special training for ambassadors and DCMs on interacting with the media and giving interviews.

Back in Washington, I gave speeches about our Middle East policy as well, to the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, the Secretary's Open Forum and several universities.

Our NEA public affairs budget had been cut for ten years, but we pushed to secure a big increase in discretionary funding. We were also able to recruit and increase staff, finally filling positions at all of our NEA posts and in the Washington office. In some cases I had to send out Civil Service officers on "excursion tours." I also pulled people from other regions to serve in the Middle East so that PD offices in the region were fully staffed.

It was a scramble. Not only were we still dealing with the consolidation of USIA into the State Department, but my officers were on different floors. Public Affairs was on the sixth floor and Public Diplomacy was on the fifth floor. I was always running up and down the stairs as well as dealing with officers in the Middle East and the NEA Front Office.

Communicating with public diplomacy offices in our embassies in the Near East was a priority. I started writing a weekly letter to the field called "In the NEA Loop" to let our officers know what was happening in Washington and to be aware of program opportunities such as new exchange programs and regional projects. I shared success stories from the posts to praise those who were putting together groundbreaking projects and to inspire others.

Sometimes the pressure was tremendous. I started taking walks from my office in NEA to the Vietnam Memorial, striding around the monuments and parkland when I was stressed out. That whole area, from the Lincoln Memorial to the Capitol, is an oasis of quiet greenery; that's one of the advantages being in Washington. I used to circle the perimeter of the lake and return to the office refreshed.

It was essential for NEA's new Assistant Secretary, Bill Burns, to meet the media, so we set up meetings for him at the Foreign Press Center with journalists from the Middle East. We also invited representatives from the American Muslim community to meet Bill Burns and talk about the impact of 9/11.

Q: What part of the job did you enjoy the most?

BARODY: I got the biggest "psychic salary" from being near the center of the highest-priority national security action of the day and working with officials at the White House and State to find answers. On the personal side, one of the advantages of being the head of the office was the opportunity to travel to 14 out of the 16 NEA countries. I came to know and understand the Middle East in a new light based on the awareness that comes from being physically present in a new country.

As Deputy Director of NEA/PPD, I was dispatched to Algeria, a critical-threat post with a new Public Affairs Officer, to provide public diplomacy support for the visit of Secretary Madeleine Albright. As Director, I went to Yemen at a time when it was relatively calm. I stayed at the home of Deputy Chief of Mission Brad Hanson, a National War College colleague of mine. Brad's house had been bombed a couple of times, but fortunately not while I was there. Barbara Bodine was the ambassador.

The job they were doing in Yemen was so impressive, working under difficult circumstances, which have gotten worse since then. But they were out there, getting the American message to people on the street and sponsoring American cultural events. They were helping impoverished women set up micro-enterprises. Even though U.S. Embassy offices were behind a walled compound, they were out there advancing the mission at risk to their safety. I had the chance to go to Oman for the first time as well. Seeing how clean and well-run Oman was, a moderate Islamic nation in a tough neighborhood, was a revelation.

The only place I felt uncomfortable as a female traveling alone through the region was in Saudi Arabia. I didn't cover my face, but I wore a burka and covered my head when I went out. The idea that women were expected to sit in the back of the bus was reminiscent of our own past and Rosa Parks. The fact that if you were in a public market, any of the "volunteers" had the right to challenge you, harass you, made me uneasy. Yet American female officers working at the embassy adapted and did substantive, policy-driven work in that harsh environment.

I also enjoyed working on the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI). As director of NEA/PPD, I was in on the ground floor of the launching of MEPI, created under President George W. Bush and Secretary Powell to encourage greater citizen participation in governance, advance civil society and economic reform in the region.

NEA Deputy Assistant Secretary Liz Cheney and I worked together on initiating a variety of programs, such as training Arab journalists and working with educators to revise school curricula. Remembering that my Syria colleague Gretchen Welch was now in Egypt as the wife of Ambassador David Welch, I suggested that she be designated the director of MEPI in Egypt. With Gretchen's exceptional management skills, it was a match made in heaven.

Working in NEA/PPD allowed me to experience first-hand most of the countries in the Middle East. I didn't go to Iraq at that time, but later spent a year there. Closer to home, I also traveled to the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs to deliver a lecture and moderate discussions in a conference on U.S. policy in the Middle East. I was invited to the White House to serve as a rapporteur for a conference on Culture and Diplomacy. It was a chance to shake hands with Meryl Streep, Yo-Yo Ma, and Bill and Hillary Clinton on my birthday in the year 2000.

Q: I understand you went from a geographic bureau to a functional bureau, still in Washington.

Director of Strategic Planning and External Affairs, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL/SEA), 2002-2004

BAROODY: That's right. I moved from NEA to the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL) as Director of the Office of Strategic Planning and External Affairs, from 2002 to 2004.

At the time, DRL was led by representatives from the International Republican Institute (IRI). DRL Director Lorne Crane was from IRI, Deputy Director Elizabeth Dugan was from IRI, and there were a number of lower-ranked people who worked there also from IRI. They were conscientious, committed to promoting democracy, human rights, and fair labor practices worldwide.

It was a change for me to work in a bureau with so many political appointees and so few Foreign Service Officers; FSOs constituted a minority of DRL's staff. DLA staff included civil service officers, AAAS Fellows, Boren Fellows, Schedule B staff and interns.

My focus was on directing public affairs for all our major policy issues, especially related to the annual Human Rights Reports, which DRL published. That meant drafting press guidance, talking points, power points and speeches for the Front Office, and ramping up the number of speaking engagements the Assistant Secretary and others took on. As a result, DRL got unprecedented press coverage and an increase in budget.

Q: Were you able to draw on any of the expertise you had picked up as an office director in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs?

BAROODY: Yes. We were still in the aftermath of 9/11 and preparing for war in Iraq and that cast a shadow over all of our work. Protecting human rights and thwarting terrorist attacks are intertwined. I created a daily early-morning Iraq human rights report summarizing Saddam Hussein's monumental abuses, and this round-up went to upper levels at State, the National Security Council and the Agency for International Development.

Q: I think it's something that, once it's been institutionalized - the respect for human rights and the fact that we look at it so carefully, as it has been at the State Department - I think it's got a certain self-perpetuity.

BAROODY: We felt encouraged about the work we were doing. We knew it was essential and could change lives. There were areas of greatest concern, including North Korea, Iraq, Cuba, Iran and Burma. I drafted a successful proposal to win $100,000 in seed money to establish a program to send American books to Cuba. I also worked with the Holocaust Museum in Washington on training State Department officers abroad to recognize and report conditions that could lead to genocide.

My office did a lot of outreach, creating new products for use by our embassies. We published a pamphlet called "Supporting Human Rights and Democracy." For the first time, we published and distributed booklets in other languages, notably Arabic, looking at human rights initiatives in the Middle East, and published them in French for Africa. The embassies ordered and distributed thousands of them.

We also set up speaking engagements by DRL officers as part of strategic engagements and bureau-wide training sessions on how to deal with the press. I brought in Public Affairs colleagues to help with coaching. Working with my staff, we designed a power-point presentation for DRL colleagues to draw on when speaking to outside groups about the bureau's mission.

Many of us in DRL contributed to editing the Human Rights reports. A group of us would come into a big room all together and edit the reports. Sometimes we'd go back to the post in question and say we needed a more information, or ask "Can you provide more substantiation of this charge?"

A major share of my job as Office Director was management, taking care of personnel, budget issues, and team-building. I hosted an off-site with my staff at the Foreign Press Center, a half-day meeting that ended with lunch at the National Press Club. I made sure everyone on the staff had an equal chance to travel.

DRL was not as stressful as NEA. The slower pace meant I was able to take on work-related activities outside the office.

Q: That gets into the "work-life balance" people talk about so much these days.

BAROODY: That's right. I volunteered to work on loan to the Board of Examiners when that bureau experienced a serious shortage. After a week of training, I spent a month administering the Foreign Service oral exam in Washington, D.C. and in Seattle.

I was elected chairman of the editorial board of the "*Foreign Service Journal*," the monthly publication of the American Foreign Service Association. I ran the board meetings with *FSJ* Editor Steve Honley. We had a lively board, with outstanding officers such as Ted Wilkinson and Tatiana Gfoeller, committed to publishing the kind of journal that conveyed "news you can use" and pulled the Foreign Service community together.

I was also elected to the board of the State Department Federal Credit Union (SDFCU). We made decisions about assets and liabilities that affected the finances of my colleagues and my own family. Carrying out the "due diligence" needed to make those judgments requires serious research. I give credit to those who have served on the SDFCU board for years, such as Robert Petersen.

Being posted at Main State – as we call the Harry S Truman building – offers some advantages, such as early-morning language programs you can take before you begin the workday. I took early-morning Spanish during the two-year period I was in DRL and got to a level of proficiency that made further study a breeze.

Anyone who has the chance to participate in Seminar XXI, a program by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) here in Washington, should go for it. MIT invites a small number of State Department and military officers and industrial executives every year to attend dinners with lectures on foreign policy issues once a month, and off-sites a couple of weekends, for a year. That year, the dinners were at the Cosmos Club, so the cuisine was as nourishing as the lectures.

Public Affairs Officer, Santiago Chile 2004-2007

Q: It's June 2nd and we begin again. So after some time in the U.S., you ventured off overseas again, back to the Middle East?

BAROODY: No, this time we were up for something completely different, so - on to Chile, Public Affairs Officer in Santiago.

When my husband and I arrived in Santiago, it was a pivot point in Chile's history. Ricardo Lagos was president but Michelle Bachelet, a Socialist, was on her way to becoming the first female president of Chile. Former President Augusto Pinochet was still alive. Our house was a block and a half from his, which seemed peculiar in a way – like living down the street from Abraham Lincoln or Genghis Khan or some other historic figure. We never saw Pinochet; he was an elderly man by then. Nonetheless, his family had a compound near us in the suburb of La Dehesa.

Craig Kelly was the ambassador the whole time we were there. I had a staff of three officers. Santiago Public Affairs had been downsized; our Cultural Affairs Officer position had been taken away in what was called the "Iraq tax" at the time. Foreign Service Officers were pulled out of embassies around the world and sent to Iraq because that was the priority at that time. But I had three officers and 23 local staff, Foreign Service Nationals, and it was a terrific team.

Q: Why did you go to Chile after a career in the Middle East?

BAROODY: My husband and I chose Chile for a couple of reasons. The State Department encourages officers to do an out-of-area tour. I'd spent my career pretty much in the Mediterranean, and we wanted to be in a WHA (Bureau of Western Hemispheric Affairs) post for our out-of-area experience. We wanted to learn Spanish; it's widely-spoken in the U.S. and worldwide. The other motivation was that we had gotten to know a Chilean military attaché and his family when we were posted in Israel and thought, "Chileans must be great to work with." That turned out to be true.

But not having served in Central or South America before, we were in for some surprises. Chileans were not "warm and fuzzy" but seem a little distant until you get to know them, then they're friends for life. Chile is a prosperous country with a well-educated, literate, computer-literate society. At the time that we went there, only a small percentage of Chileans could speak English, three percent of the population, which was astonishing because otherwise they're very internationally engaged.

We also sensed that Chile's social structure was hierarchical on an ethnic basis. At the top, Croatians were high on the list of people in the upper echelons of society. They had emigrated from Croatia to Chile decades ago. The Basques were also at the top. You could figure out who the Basque families were by the two "R's" in their names, like Errazuriz. These were people whose ancestors had come from the Basque Country and were often wealthy and well-connected.

Some Chileans with Palestinian and Syrian backgrounds were among the most prosperous. There are Chileans with ancestry from Italy, Germany, the UK - although a lot of the British left Chile - and a small American population. There are also the indigenous people, the Mapuches, Aymaras, Diaguitas, Lickanantays and Quechuas.

Q: Where do they send their kids to college?

BAROODY: Chile had about 70 public and private universities and a lot of "professional institutes," so most Chileans went to school in their own country. The Catholic University and University of Chile were the most prestigious. Fewer than 1,000 Chileans studied in the U.S., and that was mostly in graduate schools.

Chile is essentially an island, psychologically though not geographically. It's very long, as long as the United States is wide - 3,000 miles. But it's only about a hundred miles

across. You've got the ocean on one side and the Andes Mountains on the other. So it's this long, skinny country with 13 separate regions, and if you're in Santiago, there are only a couple of other major cities you can drive to. If you want to travel to other cities, you have to get on a plane, because it's that much distance between the major population areas.

The other thing people don't realize is the variation in Chile's geography. The driest place on earth is in the north. It's where the United States, the European Union and the Japanese have set up giant telescopes, in the Atacama Desert, because it's so dry and clear. I met people who had never owned an umbrella. They get mountain water from the Andes and use it to cultivate their crops, especially olive groves.

You head south from that extreme dryness to the Santiago region. It's like northern California, the part where they grow grapes for wine, Yountville or Sonoma, that kind of climate. South of Santiago is a region of rainforests and spectacular mountains. Torres del Paine National Park, in Chile's Patagonia, has icebergs, pampas grasslands, rivers, forests – it's spectacular. Keep going south and you get end up in Antarctica.

Q: What were the foreign policy priorities for the U.S. in Chile?

BARODY: The year we arrived the emphasis was on the U.S.-Chile economic relationship. We were just completing the pilot year of the Free Trade Agreement with Chile, the first one in Latin America. Chile was a regional leader; they had more bilateral trade agreements than any other country in the world. Having a vigorous economy was important to the Chileans. I met a number who defended Pinochet, despite the military dictatorship and human rights abuses, because of how he had strengthened and stabilized the economy.

So part of the public diplomacy agenda was to encourage good economic relations. As such, a priority for my section was to promote English, because you can't flourish in the world economic system without knowing the language of global trade; you can't communicate about scientific research. The language of the Internet is English; that is the lingua franca now. So we did everything we could to help Chileans learn English. We had two Foreign Service Nationals specializing in English, led by Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer Carolyn Turpin.

We brought English teaching experts; we had English Teaching Fellows (known as ELFs – great acronym) to work on curriculum development and textbook reform. We launched "Sesame English" on Chilean TV. When we sponsored an essay contest in English, we received over a thousand entries. We revived an NGO that had been devoted to the teaching of English and created an inter-embassy task force with the other English-speaking countries to coordinate our collective efforts. We also worked with the Peace Corps and the Department of Education on promoting English.

Q: Were you able to send Chilean teachers to the U.S. to perfect their English?

BAROODY: We did some of that, but in line with the adage "teach me to fish" we did something better: we originated a "Summer Institute for English Teachers." We organized and fully funded it the first year, working with the Ministry of Education to select the teacher participants. We scouted around for a venue and decided on the American School, called Nido de Aiguilles or "Eagle's Nest."

The best part was that the Department of Education found this training so effective that they took it over. It continues to this day, going on almost 20 years now. Creating a sustainable program is like hitting a home run.

Another part of our public diplomacy agenda was to promote bilateral commerce. One of the big events that happened the first year we were there was the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation conference, the APEC Summit, which met in Chile that year. Chile brought together 21 economies from around the Pacific, representing 40 percent of the world's population. Chile is a Pacific Rim country, and APEC brought in economists and politicians from throughout Asia.

The White House was represented; President George W. Bush was there. Condoleezza Rice, the Secretary of State, also came to Chile and the U.S. Trade Representative – all told, an American delegation of 1500 people. Working with the White House and State, I directed the public affairs component of U.S. participation in APEC that year. Afterward, I had to draft evaluations for 38 FSOs and FSNs who came from Asia, Europe and throughout Latin America to work on the conference.

Q: Was there still a strong connection of the "Chicago Boys" with the economy of Chile?

BAROODY: Yes, the "Chicago Boys" were Chilean economists who trained at the University of Chicago under Milton Friedman in the 70s and 80s. They became politically powerful and have been credited with turning Chile into the best economy in Latin America. Economists still talked about that influence and how important it was for Chile.

We were also focusing on Chile's judicial system, on judicial reform. USIS did valuable work in the years that I was there, largely thanks to FSN Monica Alcalde, and saw tangible success. We brought International Visitors in to talk about judicial reform; we made book donations on legal reform. We brought in experts for in-depth training on areas such as drug trafficking, cybercrime and money laundering, and sent Chilean judges to the U.S. for training.

We looked at judicial reform from every angle – as an essential part of democracy, as an aspect of human rights, as a means of strengthening national security and countering international organized crime. The Chilean judiciary had withered under Pinochet, but with a lot of help from the U.S. Embassy, it transformed into the most advanced in the region. Monica won an award from the Lois Roth Foundation for her dedication.

As the Public Affairs Officer, I was chairman of the Fulbright board, working with a capable and energetic Chilean director, Denise St. Jean. One of the board members, Malcolm Wilkey, and I disagreed about some issue when we first met, but we and our spouses soon became the best of friends, and Dick and I treasured the time we spent with Malcolm and his wife Emma.

I worked with Denise to commemorate Fulbright's 50th anniversary and to increase the number of women applicants for scholarships. Perhaps my longest-lasting accomplishment was persuading her to move to a more spacious Fulbright office with room for academic counseling, a big improvement.

Q: It sounds like a lot of your work took place outside the embassy.

BAROODY: More than you might imagine. In addition to Fulbright, I was responsible for 14 binational centers all over the country. These were centers that had originally been part of the U.S. Embassy, part of Public Affairs, and then they had privatized, which was a good thing. But when I visited each of them, I realized that of the 14, some were good and some were not. Some of these centers were withering and had become kind of shabby. So one thing that I did was to shut two of them down. That was painful because some of the people running these places had been working on behalf of the United States, with our best interests at heart, trying to bring together the two cultures for years.

But I'd walk in, I'd see that the hallways were dirty, the flags were dirty. They didn't have books; they didn't really teach anything. It was a "Bi-national Center" in name only. So I shut them down. It was a tough thing to do, but you have to maintain standards if you're going to endorse a facility that flies the American flag.

Q: When you look back, is there anything you did in Chile that you're particularly proud of?

One initiative that worked out really well was the establishment of new American Corners. This had been the idea of one of the Under Secretaries for Public Affairs, Charlotte Beers. To create these American Corners, we would meet with a local university and come to an agreement. We would give them a small grant, a computer and some books, provide American research databases and install our "Corner" in one of their university libraries. In turn, the universities would provide space and staff, usually one person who would help the students and professors accessing the American materials. The Chilean academic community was eager to work with us.

We set up the world's first American Corner in the world devoted entirely to science and technology, Ambassador Craig Kelly's idea. We searched for a university that would partner with us. Local staff member Dinah Lee Arnett and I visited half a dozen venues in Santiago and met with officials at each one. We found the right fit and set it up.

One of the reasons the Science and Technology American Corner was so successful in Santiago was because they have a large, robust scientific community. NASA is there

because of Chile's unique geographic features that allow NASA to simulate the surface of Mars, set up huge telescopes and get a clear view of the skies.

There's a lot of scientific work going on in Chile, not just astronomical but also medical and other research. So this was the perfect place to give it a try, and the Science and Technology American Corner we pioneered has been replicated throughout the world. Dinah Lee Arnett, an American who moved to Chile and became part of the local staff, took over responsibility for all the American Corners in Chile and has done a superb job.

We also created an International Visitor Alumni Association to keep up with Chileans who benefited from our exchange program and hosted events for the Fulbright Alumni Association.

Michael Orlansky was hired to be the Cultural Affairs Officer once they reinstated the position and Carolyn Turpin was the Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer. John Vance and Tim Stater were, successively, Press Officers, working with six TV stations and eight daily newspapers, such as *El Mercurio* – and that was just in Santiago. It was a remarkable staff, both the officers and the local professionals.

Q: Sounds like you had fun. Any downsides?

BAROODY: The work wasn't always pleasant. One tragic event we had to handle was that a bus full of American tourists who had been on a cruise ship had taken an excursion to see one of the highest-altitude lakes in the world, Chungara Lake in northern Chile. When they were coming down the mountain, the driver fell asleep. The bus plunged off the mountain and a number of American tourists were killed. The bus driver survived.

We had to deal with the families of the victims and carry out the public affairs aspect of the accident. We went a couple of months later with Ambassador Kelly to lay a wreath at the site where the Americans died.

Q: Were you able to do much personal travel in the region?

BAROODY: We used to drive over the Andes Mountains into Argentina. We would go into Mendoza, just over the border. It's a scenic drive; it was like driving through the Grand Canyon. We'd go to Mendoza because the wine is wonderful there, especially the Malbec, and the vineyards are open to visitors. We'd also fly to Buenos Aires to visit Foreign Service colleagues and explore the city.

We flew to Easter Island, which is part of Chile, to see the moai, the enormous stone heads along the coasts. Interesting that the United States built an Alternate Landing Site for the Space Shuttle on Easter Island, which opened it up for larger aircraft and more tourists.

I traveled for work, too, of course. One memorable experience was going to the southern-most part of Chile. We donated computer equipment and recorders and set up a modest

Center to capture the oral histories of the indigenous Yaghan people, considered the southernmost tribe in the world who have been around for 7,000 years. There were only about 50 Yaghans left in Chile in 2007, only three full-blooded.

Q: How was the housing?

BARODY: We had a charming, though oddly-constructed house. It had a sizable garden in the back where we hosted official receptions. The whole area had been owned by Franciscan monks, and in order to sustain themselves they raised walnut trees. They planted the trees and grew, collected and sold the walnuts.

At some point, the monastery sold the land. It was subdivided and developers built these single-family homes, but kept the walnut trees. I loved going into our backyard with the swimming pool and the trees. Collecting the walnuts was a bonus - they were delicious. Unfortunately, walnut branches hung over the swimming pool, so walnuts fell into the pool and the water was always freezing.

Another downside was that our house was broken into - every house on our block was broken into - and burglarized. I was not home at the time; I was at church and my husband was in the U.S. I came home and found that someone had cut a hole in our bathroom window, crawled in that way to circumvent the alarm system and our dog, and pried the safe out from where it had been bolted into the wall of our bedroom closet. They stole all of my jewelry and my husband's sunglasses and cologne. We were most upset about the jewelry, including my engagement ring and irreplaceable family heirlooms. I'm sure it was all melted down the same day. The thieves were never caught.

Q: Was your husband able to find a job?

BARODY: My resourceful husband figured out how to telecommute. Dick persuaded the company he worked for in Northern Virginia, General Dynamics Information Technology, to let him take his job with him to Chile. He became attached to the Office of International Technology Cooperation under contract to the U.S. Army. He worked on coordinating with other countries on scientific, medical and military technology research. One particularly important partnership he created was between the Army's Walter Reed Institute for Research and Chilean medical researchers to try to find a vaccine for dengue fever.

Professor of National Security Strategy, National War College, 2007-2008

Q: So after you left Chile, you came back to Washington?

BARODY: Yes. I had a great year teaching at the National War College. One of the advantages of having a PhD is that it makes you competitive for opportunities like that. It gave me a chance to reread much of what I had studied before, to teach some very capable officers, and to travel to Japan and Taiwan for the first time.

But then there was talk around Washington that Foreign Service Officers were not volunteering to serve in Iraq. The Foreign Service Director for Secretary Rice announced in October 2007 that some FSOs would be forced to serve in Iraq.
It compelled me to volunteer to go there, though I would have loved another year teaching at the War College. I had studied Arabic, had already served in the region in Syria, Morocco and Israel, and had traveled pretty much everywhere in the Middle East. Just as my husband had served in the Vietnam conflict when he was in the Air Force, I felt it was my turn to serve in a war zone.

Senior Advisor, Rule of Law Office, U.S. Embassy Baghdad, 2008-2009

Baghdad was the largest embassy in the world; we had over a thousand people. The hope was to transform Iraq into a viable sovereign nation once the fighting had ended. The country needed to be rebuilt. It had been broken for a long time, first because of the eight-year war with Iran and then Iraq's war against the Coalition.
The hope was that it would be reborn, a model for other countries in the region, strong again.

2008-2009 was a period of transition. The U.S. had stopped operating under the UN Security Council mandate and was working under a negotiated strategic framework agreement with Iraq. It was also a time of transition in the sense that Ambassador Ryan Crocker left and Chris Hill took over, and about five months into my tour of duty there, the embassy moved its offices from a temporary location at Saddam's Republican Palace to the new embassy compound.

I was lucky because the whole year I was there I was in an apartment on the new embassy compound, so I never had to live in a trailer. It was a decent apartment with a view of the Tigris River, close to my office. I would just cross the street from my apartment to my office, once we moved to the new compound. My apartment building was also next to what the military called the "DFAC", the dining facility.

I was the State Department's Senior Policy Officer, the first one, in the Rule of Law Office. There were five agencies working together in that office, about 300 American employees looking to rebuild Iraq's legal system and promote a culture of human rights and security. I was the only State Department officer. The others were from the Department of Justice, the FBI, a lot of military and contractors.

Q: What was the Iraqi law situation?

BAROODY: It was a mess, and it was a pity because at one time Iraq's legal system had been credible, even impressive, for that part of the world. But under Saddam Hussein - he was a dictator, and his idea of a legal system had nothing to do with democracy or rule of law.

Saddam ruled through security services and revolutionary courts. He believed in using informers and crushing dissent. There was nothing "rule of law" about that. At one time,

Iraq had the best law school in the Middle East, but that changed. Iraq's legal system was a mix of common law, Napoleonic and Sharia law. Napoleonic law was a factor because Iraqis had been influenced by the French jurisprudence system. Sharia was dominant particularly when it came to family matters.

Things had gone downhill under Saddam Hussein. When you have a dictator, you don't have due process, you don't have access to counsel, and you certainly don't have human rights. These were among the things we were trying to restore from the ground up.

Priorities included rebuilding the law schools. That was part of my job since working in the educational area was within my area of expertise. Having resources meant we could accomplish substantial projects quickly. We could create legal aid service clinics; we could design prison facilities, detention facilities so that they were more humanely constructed. We could rebuild courthouses. We could put courthouses and judges and lawyers in guarded compounds and protect them, necessary because legal professionals were being assassinated along with their families.

Q: Were you helping Iraqis pick up technical and legal expertise?

BAROODY: No, I don't have a legal background. What I brought to the Rule of Law Office was knowledge of the State Department, the ability to communicate among the many agencies at the embassy, and a solid grasp of the political context we were working in. Everything we did was on an interagency basis.

We had one group helping the Iraqis rewrite their constitution. We were looking at things like judicial independence. I inspected some Iraqi detention facilities. They were grim; I mean, let's face it, any kind of prison is grim, but some are more humanely organized than others, and we were trying to help with that. Considering how dangerous it was just to be in Iraq at a time of active combat, we were able to get some good work done.

Q: The embassy was well-protected and you had troops everywhere. How dangerous was it?

BAROODY: When our offices were at the palace, the most dangerous part of my day was when I got on the shuttle bus to go between the embassy compound and the palace. The compound itself looked like a medium security prison and we were the inmates. That's not to disparage the fact that we needed that security; we needed the towers with marksmen with sniper rifles atop them. We needed the barbed wire and the high walls.

But when you got on the shuttle, you were more vulnerable than at any other time of day, first of all because of the IEDs, Improvised Explosive Devices, that dotted the roadsides. Thank God I never encountered any.

We also were under fire from incoming missiles, particularly from Sadr City across the river. I got used to the "duck and cover, duck and cover" calls over the broadcast system. When you were walking along the street you would hear this "duck and cover" call from

loudspeakers. The idea was that you look for the nearest bunker made out of concrete and metal, and you scooted in and got underneath so that if a missile did explode nearby, you'd have some protection.

The first time when I was in my apartment, when I first arrived, and I heard “duck and cover” in the middle of the night, I was petrified. They give you training to get away from the windows, because if there is an incoming missile or if there are missile shards, they might shatter the glass. So you want to be away from all the windows. I was scared to death. I got up and went into my bathroom, which was as far away from any windows as I could get, shut the door and waited. Finally, I heard “all clear, all clear, all clear.” That was the first time.

The second time that this happened in the middle of the night, I heard “duck and cover, duck and cover.” I sat up, turned over, and went back to sleep. That was the way it went for the rest of the year. You get used to things, which is not always such a good idea, because people did get killed or injured from incoming missiles. If you're out on the street and you hear “duck and cover,” that's a bit dicier. You try to get into a building or you dash into one of those bunkers.

But it’s easier to accept the danger if you understand what’s at stake and how much our work could change people’s lives. We realized that Iraq needed a new approach to law and justice and we also felt that the only way Iraq could function as a sovereign country after we left, as part of the international community, was to have a functioning legal system. So we looked at all kinds of approaches.

We looked at training. One of the things the Rule of Law office could do, and that I could lend my expertise to, was to initiate an exchange visit to U.S. law schools by scholars and administrators at Iraqi law schools so that they could get a sense of what legal education looked like in the United States.

We sent the dean and the assistant dean of the Baghdad College of Law to visit American law schools. They were able to get a sense of how we use legal education for practical application rather than pure theory. After they came back to Baghdad, they began to institute curriculum changes, incorporating what they learned.

The Dean that we sent to the United States returned to lead a national curriculum development project for the entire country, so all 34 Iraqi law schools benefited from his training. We also took Iraqi lawyers to U.S. courts to observe trials from beginning to end.

One of the primary things we needed to do was extend legal aid services to indigent Iraqis, because in many cases Iraqi citizens had a right to legal aid services, they had a right to compensation or pensions, but because they were not able to read, they had no way to fill out the forms.

So the United States created legal aid clinics at detention centers, among other places, to help Iraqis who had been held in prisons, in some cases for years. There was no habeas corpus. It was literally "cell without a number, prisoner without a name." People were being held for years who had never been charged with a crime. So we established legal clinics to help them at least get their voices heard and eventually to meet with legal counsel.

I documented the establishment of the legal aid clinics and then encouraged the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) around the country to replicate these clinics by distributing a template to help them request funding. I also sent them a model of how to start such a clinic. It was vital to share such information, especially to those isolated PRTs.

We also came up with the idea of a voucher system. The idea was that we would promote a system of vouchers in which someone who needed legal assistance would get a voucher for a certain amount of money. They would give that voucher to a lawyer who would then represent them in court. Our hope was to strengthen the Iraqi Bar Association by spreading the work around.

One of my projects was running the monthly "Rule of Law Community Forum." Typically, we would have judges come to this forum to talk to other Iraqis and to Americans about the work they were doing. One forum, for example, featured two judges who investigated and prosecuted acts of genocide and crimes against humanity. These gatherings provided Iraqis in the legal community an opportunity to meet with each other and to question high-level Iraqi judicial and corrections officials. It might have been the only chance they ever had to meet these authorities face-to-face.

There were signs of incremental progress in advancing the rule of law in Iraq during the year I was there. One was that, at the trial of "Chemical Ali" and the notorious war criminals who conspired with him, the final sentences reflected clear consideration of evidence rather than just coerced confessions. In that case, the court was being used for justice, not revenge.

We emphasized scientific methods with the Iraqis. We tried to get them to understand that coercion of confessions was not good jurisprudence. They didn't understand or employ even the most fundamental forensics, such as dusting for fingerprints, much less the use of DNA to identify perpetrators.

We built the Iraqis laboratories so that they could use forensic science as a way of proving their cases. In the long run, though, the labs were not maintained, and despite all the training and good work that we did, in many cases they fell into disuse and disrepair. Maybe it was too much, too soon.

We were optimistic and were trying everything possible. It was the first U.S. embassy to operate at full force in a war zone since Vietnam. The advantage of working in such a huge embassy was that it allowed you to get to know a lot of people. I ventured beyond

the Rule of Law office; I worked with officers in the political and public diplomacy sections and socialized with embassy colleagues from all divisions.

Being a public diplomacy officer at heart gave me some "value added" in terms of perspective. I realized, for instance, that one of the things that we were *not* doing in the Rule of Law office was reporting successes. We were not sending out cables. We were not sending memos or lengthy e-mails, even though our embassy leadership - the DCM and the Ambassador - emphasized the need to communicate with Washington. The Rule of Law office was getting a lot accomplished but we weren't telling anybody back home what we were doing.

So one of the things I did was teach my colleagues how to draft strong, concise cables. I wrote several cables about the Iraqi system of justice. Getting this information into electrons improved communication not only between the embassy and the Department of State and Department of Justice, but also within the embassy. It also gave fellow officers a chance to know what we were doing. I established a site for the Rule of Law office on the Embassy's Internet website, which was getting 320,000 hits per month.

Q: Didn't it feel strange, working in Saddam's palace?

BAROODY: The Republican Palace was an attractive place to work, but surprisingly cheesy. It wasn't an ancient monument. It had been built by German contractors in the 1960s or 70s. There were portraits of Saddam Hussein everywhere. It was filled with fake rococo and gilt and plaster. It looked splendid at a distance, but when you dug down an inch or two you realized that you were looking at plaster, not marble.

Even so, some parts of the palace were quite appealing. We used former ballrooms for staff lounges and could have lunch by a well-maintained swimming pool. There was a luncheonette where you could get your sandwich and fruit, then eat by the pool or under a cabana to eat your lunch. There was an aviary near the pool full of well-cared-for birds that I visited on a daily basis.

But then we had to leave the palace and move into the new embassy. We had been given a month's notice by the Iraqis that they wanted the Republican Palace back. So fine, fine. We were moving our files, putting supplies in boxes, getting the furniture ready.

But then suddenly the Iraqis said, "We want you out by January first." It was much less time than we expected. So we transferred our files and supplies and equipment in record time to the new Rule of Law office in the so-called "schoolhouse" in the U.S. Embassy compound. The building was designed to be a school for future days when families would accompany officers to their post in Baghdad.

I had a suspicion that because we had moved so quickly we might have left behind some things we wouldn't necessarily want to fall into the hands of the Iraqis. So after everybody else had left, I went back to the palace just before it was turned over to the Iraqis and wandered through all of our Rule of Law offices. I found a sack full of material

that contained sensitive information or had personal data about our embassy employees – names and phone numbers – and hauled it back to the new embassy for shredding. It was also a chance to say a final farewell.

I did enjoy my brief time working in the palace. It was surreal.

Q: How did you spend your time when you weren't working?

BAROODY: We were restricted in what we could do and where we could go to three square miles because of the threat of rocket and mortar attack, so it was claustrophobic, eating in the dining hall, living in these apartments. You had to find things to do outside of work. You had to be creative.

A USAID officer, Carol Altstatt, organized a group of animal-lovers to raise a family of kittens. Some smart cat had wandered onto the embassy compound and had kittens, so a group of us set up a schedule to take care of them. We would go in turn to make sure that the kittens had food and water and their area was clean. We built a hut to protect them from the rain. Once they were old enough to travel, Carol worked with the ASPCA in Maryland to fly them here. So somewhere here in the greater Washington area there are Iraqi cats running around, or more likely their descendants.

Our movements were constricted, but I was able to go to church. At other posts, except for Chile, I've always been able to find an Anglican Church, and there was an Anglican Church in Iraq with a congregation of Iraqi Christians. I didn't have to venture far off the embassy compound; I just had to cross the street. This inspired me to serve on the Embassy's Minorities Committee. We worked with some of the Iraqi religious groups to help them make their lives more secure and win respect for their rights.

Q: What about women's rights? That must have been a challenge.

BAROODY: It was. Looking at one of the "minorities" – women - I set up the first Federal Women's Program for the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad. I did a little research and found out that having a federal women's program is mandatory; every embassy is supposed to have one. This had been established under John F. Kennedy's administration to help women promote their careers. So I became the first coordinator for Embassy Baghdad. My job was to advise embassy officials on implications of the Equal Employment Opportunity act for women within the embassy.

As the year went on, I concentrated more on women's issues. Nobody else in my office wanted to focus on this, so I created a "women's issues portfolio" for myself within the Office of Rule of Law. Iraq can't have a strong economy if more than half of the population is not allowed to work or get a decent education - can't read - so it was imperative to help women get some semblance of civic rights.

Women faced so many legal problems in Iraq: economic discrimination, lack of access to legal counsel. They were not part of the political decision-making process. I joined a group called the “Iraq Strategic Women's Initiatives Committee” led by Iraqi women.

There were so few opportunities to interact personally with Iraqis. I chose to serve in Iraq partly because I studied Arabic and wanted to use my Arabic language skills, however imperfect, in the line of work. I wanted to use my knowledge of Middle Eastern culture and reach out to Iraqis face-to-face. There were not many opportunities to do so. But this “Iraq Strategic Women's Initiatives Committee” was led by Iraqi women, and they were drafting a plan with legislation to guarantee women's rights. I participated in the meetings on a weekly basis. I also organized a gathering for Iraqi women judges to meet with embassy officers in the home of the Chargé, and drafted a fact sheet on U.S. initiatives to help Iraqi women which was translated into Arabic and widely disseminated within Iraq.

The Rule of Law Office encouraged an increase in the percentage of women police officers and helped to establish training of female Iraqi Corrections Officers to work in women's prisons and on the streets. There were a number of reasons why having more women police was a good idea. One was that Iraqi women were being recruited as suicide bombers. They would place the bombs under their djellabas to appear pregnant, wade into crowds and ignite the bombs. It was not culturally appropriate for male police officers to pat down a pregnant woman as she went through security checks. Recruiting women officers was a way to approach that problem.

I also helped secure funding for women's legal aid centers. There were a lot of widows in Iraq after all the years of fighting, and many were impoverished because they were illiterate and had no job skills. It was essential for them to have access to the pensions they had been promised. They just had to apply for them, but that’s not easy to do if you can’t read. The women’s legal aid centers we set up worked with the widows to fill out the paperwork.

As the Federal Women's Program coordinator, I encouraged successful women who worked at the embassy, such as DCM Pat Butenis, to come to our meetings and talk about their career paths. Linda Taglialatela addressed the group in another program. She had risen to the top ranks of Human Resources at the State Department and is now a U.S. ambassador. She told us a remarkable story of how she made the climb from modest beginnings to the highest ranks.

Q: How much travel were you able to do in Iraq?

BAROODY: I got around, but going anywhere was a major struggle. Getting off the embassy compound required a lot of security, usually a ride in a helicopter wearing a flak jacket and a helmet, but I did travel a bit. I went to Salahaddin in northern Iraq and Diyala, northeast of Baghdad.

My most extensive travel within Iraq came because of my assignment as Rule of Law’s liaison to the Provincial Regional Team in Najaf, a city about 100 miles south of

Baghdad. Najaf is the seat of legal teaching and jurisprudence for Shia Muslims and has the third holiest Shia mosque in the world, a site of pilgrimage. The Ayatollah Khomeini taught at the Najaf Islamic seminary.

During my stint in Iraq, 2008-2009, Najaf appeared to be functioning well even though it was in the middle of a war. The city seemed relatively prosperous; it had a functioning international airport and hotels. It looked like a place where people would go for tourism, with well-maintained parks and clean streets.

I had to be careful walking around Najaf because there are certain places you're not allowed to go to as a non-Muslim, such as the Imam Ali Mosque, so I was careful. But working with the Provincial Team there turned out to be productive and worth the risks. We helped widows apply for Iraqi benefits and improved communication between our offices in Najaf and Baghdad, and with Washington.

Q: I find that my Vietnam time served me well in this oral history program because I could at least share the experience of having worked in a war zone. One of the unexpected tensions is just getting from place to place, don't you agree?

BAROODY: Absolutely. Just to leave Baghdad to return to the U.S., you had to get in an armored car and go to an airstrip. Then you had to get into a military helicopter to go to another U.S. military camp. You had to stay there overnight in a trailer, then take a military aircraft into Jordan, just in order to get on a plane to come back to the U.S. To return to Baghdad, you had to do it all in reverse.

I spent a lot of time in helicopters in Iraq. It's a weird experience to be strapped in, wearing a Kevlar jacket and a metal helmet. When I went to Najaf to meet with the PRT, we went in a helicopter of course. Coming back at night, it was pitch black and silent except for the sound of the engine and the rotors; there was only the desert below. Suddenly we heard peculiar noises – klunk, klunk - and the pilot said, "We have mechanical problems. We have to land."

Fortunately there was a military outpost in the desert not far away and we were able to land there. They could fix the helicopter but we had a long wait in a strange, dark place. Imagine, it's the middle of the night, you're in the desert in a war zone; the helicopter's broken. You're sitting there in your Kevlar vest, holding your helmet on your lap. The fortunate thing is that when something is so surreal, you detach yourself from the reality of it. It helps you get through it.

Q: How was embassy morale when you were in Baghdad?

BAROODY: Morale was good under the circumstances. The Department of State and the Department of Defense worked hard to make living conditions, particularly within the embassy compound, bearable for staff, knowing they were separated from their families and in a dangerous place. There were some things you couldn't fix, like the blistering hot weather and sand storms so intense the Tang-colored dust would block out the sun, seep

under doorways and windowsills and coat everything. You'd wear a gas mask to cross the street.

And however comfortable the apartments or tasty the food, there was a pervasive and constant sense of danger. The risk of injury and death was real. A couple of civilian colleagues in the office next to ours, the Iraq Transition Assistance Office (ITAO), were killed in the line of duty while I was in Baghdad. Terrence Barnich was the deputy director for the office. An ITAO group was inspecting construction sites where we were working with Iraqi Ministry of Water Resources to build a waste water treatment plant, and their motorcade was struck in Fallujah by a roadside bomb on Memorial Day, May 25, 2009.

The other man from ITAO who was killed, Maged Hussein, was the first civilian in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to die in the war. He was born in Cairo, Egypt and had been an Assistant Professor at Ohio State University. He was 43 years old when he died, leaving behind a wife and young daughter. He was a nice-looking gentleman, quiet, always polite and friendly. Such a loss.

Q: When you got back, what was your feeling? You know that people talk about PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder.)

BAROODY: I don't think I experienced post-traumatic stress. People deal with stress in different ways, and I think my way of dealing with stress was to segregate that experience from the rest of my life. It was like a completely different universe.

When I force myself to think about it, I remember it all: I can see my desk in the Rule of Law office; I can see my apartment. I remember the things that I did in Baghdad, going to the swimming pool and the gymnasium and church, meeting with Iraqis. I remember it now.

But unless I dig for it, it's just not there. It's not at the forefront of my mind. Maybe one of the reasons I wasn't traumatized by serving in Iraq was that nothing bad happened to me there, thank God. The only painful aspect of that time was the loss of opportunity to be with my family, especially my husband, and my friends. The older I get, the harder it is for me to be away from them.

Q: You were there from 2008 to 2009. How did you feel about the ambassador?

Because of my previous service in NEA, I knew Ryan Crocker and he knew me. He was the first ambassador there during my tour. Ryan kept himself at a distance from most people. Then when Chris Hill took charge, he was not like Ryan Crocker, in that he really did get out there with the troops. I didn't know who he was when he first arrived, and one day some guy was butting in front of me in line in the DFAC. I said "Excuse me. You have to wait in line." I realized later it was the new ambassador. But he was very friendly.

It was exhilarating to be at the new embassy compound when they raised the American flag, indicating that we had fully moved in there. To see that flag ascending into the hard blue Iraqi skies, with the Ambassador and other officials on a podium in front of the new Front Office building – there was a sense you had just witnessed a moment of history.

Q: When you left Iraq, did you feel things were on the right track?

BAROODY: I thought that things were pretty much on the right track, but subsequently learned that a lot of these projects ended up not going anywhere, which was unfortunate because we put so much equity into them and they would have helped Iraqis well into the future. We put a lot of a huge amount of money, effort and time into them. We had to withdraw resources from other embassies around the world in order to do some of this work. But we were doing what we thought was right in leveraging every resource to try to make life better for Iraqis, and we were meeting the benchmarks for progress.

Minister-Counselor for Public Affairs, U.S. Embassy Paris, 2009-2011

Q: So when you left Baghdad, did you get a good onward assignment as a reward?

BAROODY: You could say that. I was chosen to be the Minister Counselor for Public Affairs in Paris, arguably the most prestigious job in Public Diplomacy, at the second-largest embassy in Europe.

Q: Who was the Ambassador?

BAROODY: Charles Rivkin was the ambassador. He and his wife, Susan Tolson, arrived just before Dick and I did. It was a time of transition - we had a new president, Barack Obama, and a new Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton. Lots of changes and opportunities.

Q: Had you always dreamed of going to Paris?

BAROODY: To be the Minister Counselor for Public Affairs in Paris was more than I would have wished for earlier in my career. When I was at the U.S. Information Agency, where I spent the first half of my career, there was no higher-status overseas job than being the PAO (Public Affairs Officer), the chief of section, at our embassy in France. Granted, at the time of USIA's existence, it was a position that commanded impressive resources. The Public Affairs section had magnificent offices in the Talleyrand Building across the street from the embassy, a bigger staff, a huge budget, official cars and drivers, and housing spacious enough to host representational dinners and receptions.

By the time I got the job, everything had been down-sized. My office looked out onto the Place de la Concorde, a pretty view, but it was a small office that had been somehow retrofitted, with pipes visible along the walls. There was barely enough room for a desk and a conference table. My staff was all over the place; the Cultural Affairs section was down the hall one way, the administrative office was also at a distance. The library was

on another floor. Being separated that way made it harder to coordinate the work and staff.

The residence once devoted to the Minister-Counselor for Public Affairs was assigned to a different division. Dick and I were stuck in an apartment where the combination of traffic noise and construction meant we didn't get a good night's sleep the entire time we were there. We held our representational functions at the ambassador's residence.

But I did have four excellent Foreign Service Officers on my staff. There were 22 local staff, as well as an Eligible Family Member, an American married to an FSO. I also partially supervised six field staff since I was responsible for overseeing public diplomacy (PD) activities of the American Presence Posts (APPs) in four different cities of France and two consulates. I also had five interns and was co-Chair of the Fulbright Board.

Q: What did you do for these American Presence Posts, and where were they?

BAROODY: The Public Affairs Office in Paris was like the Mother Ship that supplied the APPs with public diplomacy products, such as talking points about our policy issues of the day. We sent them books; we sent performing groups and exhibits. These were such small places, one-officer posts, and their primary job was consular. But they also did public diplomacy work to the extent that they could – programs, lectures, exchanges. The APPs were in Bordeaux, Lyon, Rennes and Toulouse and we had consulates in Strasbourg and Marseilles.

The APP local staffs were capable and interested in doing outreach work. They would identify candidates for Fulbright and other exchanges. I found out the local employees hadn't gotten any public diplomacy training in years, so I dedicated part of my budget to bringing them to Paris for professional development, and we hosted a two-day seminar on press and cultural work, grants, ethics and new communications technologies for them.

Q: Was your budget down-sized too?

BAROODY: I didn't have a complaint about the money; I was responsible for a budget of almost four million dollars a year. You might ask: "Does the U.S. Embassy really need to promote American culture in France?" Does the French Embassy really need to promote French culture in the United States? Let's face it – movies, singing groups, there's so much Franco-American cultural exchange out there already - tourism, institutional linkages between universities. We had about 20,000 American expatriates living in Paris.

So one of our challenges was to find the "value added." What was it that the embassy could do that wasn't already being done in terms of encouraging French understanding of U.S. culture and society and support for our policies?

One of the things we could do was to strengthen institutional linkages. We supported the Sister City linkages, the U.S.-French Chamber of Commerce, of course Fulbright. Instead of sponsoring lectures or bringing in concerts and art exhibits, we used that budget to strengthen American organizations that were already organizing those events. We also were very much involved with youth outreach.

Many French associations were formed after World War II to promote the French-U.S. relationship. By the time we arrived in Paris, some had grown outdated and stale. I organized a training seminar for over 100 of these "alliance groups" to help them update their fundraising, marketing and organizational skills. We also created a website for them to communicate and learn from each other.

Q: So you could tell pretty much from the start that this job would be different from your previous assignments?

BAROODY: I got a sense of what this job would be like at my first reception at the ambassador's residence, which took place the week I arrived in Paris. This had already been planned; Ambassador Rivkin had recently arrived. The ambassador's residence in Paris, the Hôtel de Pontalba, must be among the most beautiful in the USG inventory. It was built in 1855 by the Baroness Micaela de Pontalba, an American heiress whose portrait hangs in one of the reception rooms. Her heirs sold it to Baron de Rothschild. During World War II it was requisitioned by the Nazis and used as an officers' club for the Luftwaffe. The USG originally purchased it for USIA, then it became the ambassador's home.

This reception was for the launch of an American movie called "Julie and Julia" about Julia Child, whose husband had been a Cultural Attaché in Paris. So at my first embassy function, I met Meryl Streep. She was dressed up as Julia Child and fully in character, and she remained in character throughout the reception. She had on high stack heels and pearls. She was friendly and posed for pictures with guests. Stanley Tucci, who played the role of Julia Child's husband in the movie, was also there, as well as Nora Ephron, who wrote the screenplay and directed the movie.

Q: Sounds like you and the ambassador were off to a running start.

BAROODY: We were indeed. That reception gave me a preview of how much fun it could be to work in Paris and how well-connected our new ambassador was. Having that assignment gave Dick and me the chance to meet so many celebrities: Woody Allen, Jodie Foster, Diane von Furstenberg, Leslie Caron, Anna Wintour. My husband and I were invited to Ralph Lauren's 70th birthday party at the Residence. Ralph Lauren brought in 2000 red roses for the occasion. Stephen Colbert did a stand-up routine in the embassy lobby just for the staff. Olivia de Havilland was an active member of our church, the American Cathedral in Paris.

Ambassador Charles Rivkin, a political appointee, was a great fit for the job. He was fluent in French; he had spent a year in France when he was younger as an intern at

Renault. He was well-connected within the Democratic Party, close to President Obama. In addition, he was smart, personable and diplomatic in the best sense. His father had been a three-time political appointee ambassador, which is unusual. He and his wife, Susan Tolson, and their two children had arrived just a step ahead of Dick and me. So part of my job in public diplomacy was to introduce the new ambassador to France and build up goodwill toward the new administration.

The Public Affairs Office hosted a big welcoming reception for the ambassador and his family at the Residence, with live music and graffiti artists in the back garden. We invited our key contacts and opened a lot of doors for the ambassador in one evening.

We then set up a series of interviews for Ambassador Rivkin; his having fluent French was very helpful. Information Officer Paul Patin and I also arranged off-the-record events with the media, such as breakfasts, so that reporters could get to know the real Charlie Rivkin. We wrote the first drafts of editorials and speeches in which the ambassador advocated defense, trade and counterterrorism issues which were high priorities for the administration.

An added benefit was that his wife, Susan Tolson, was a star in her own right. Susan was an executive in the financial services industry with an MBA from Harvard, and served on several corporate boards. I knew she would want to play a part in cultural and educational programs, especially the ones that we hosted at the Ambassador's Residence, so I initiated biweekly meetings with her and their personal staff, Daniel Dozier and Jeremy Bernard, to brainstorm and coordinate activities.

It was a good time to be an American in Paris because the president of France, Nicolas Sarkozy, was more conservative than some previous French presidents had been. That meant the alchemy between France and the U.S. was propitious: with the new Obama Administration, we leaned a bit to the left, and with Sarkozy, the French leaned a bit to the right. That brought our bilateral relationship closer together. My job was to capitalize on this goodwill toward the new administration.

The new Secretary of State also had to make an appearance, of course. When Secretary Clinton made her first official visit to France, she came to talk about U.S. commitment to European security. I was the Deputy Control Officer. Any time you deal with a Sec State visit or, heaven help us, a President of the United States (POTUS) visit to your post, you have chaos. That's all there is to it.

The White House and the State Department send the "Advance Sherpa Team," then they send the "Sherpa Team," then they send the White House coordinators. They take the Embassy's full attention for the period of time before and during the visits. Sometimes they make demands that border on outrageous. We were told to fill a 600-seat auditorium on 48 hours' notice for one of Secretary Clinton's visits because the Secretary had a message to convey and her staff wanted every seat occupied. We got it done.

Q: You said the embassy in Tel Aviv got a lot of visitors. How about Paris? Who wouldn't go to Paris given half a chance?

BAROODY: U.S. Embassy Paris hosted a phenomenal number of official visitors. We had 14,000 "room nights" per year of people coming to visit. We provided professional support for these officials, organized meetings for them and handled press arrangements.

Among the unexpected visitors we had were athletes from an extreme wrestling team. These were from the "Ultimate Fighting Championship," the UFC. That's not what I normally watch on television, so I wasn't familiar with the Ultimate Fighting Championship. It promotes mixed martial arts, and UFC holds hundreds of events each year. These men had been brought to Europe by the USO to meet with American troops in Belgium. But there was a volcanic explosion in Iceland in 2010 that ejected a massive amount of ash into the atmosphere and grounded flights in Northern and Western Europe for six days.

The Ultimate Fighting Championship team suddenly found themselves without anything to do, so they came to Paris. I found out about this and invited them to come to the embassy to give a demonstration, because they were in Europe to send a positive message, such as promoting physical fitness. They gave a demonstration on self-defense at the embassy and everyone watched politely.

Then we thought, okay, let's take them to this underserved neighborhood in Paris to meet with minority kids and show them demonstrations on self-defense and fitness. Well, talk about rock stars! These kids all knew these performers and cheered and had a great time. That was a successful target of opportunity.

Q: Sounds like a glamourous assignment. What kind of policy issues posed a challenge?

BAROODY: There were all kinds of international events taking place demanding our attention. France held the presidency of the "Group of Eight" - governments including Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK, Canada, Russia, the U.S. and France. It also chaired a "Group of Twenty," which included national economies from two-thirds of the world's population. So Paris was playing a central role in international affairs. Secretary Clinton came frequently, sometimes on fewer than 24 hours' notice.

One of the priorities that year was continuing to promote French military involvement in Afghanistan. France had been contributing the fourth largest contingent of troops to Afghanistan, but the French government didn't talk about it much publicly because they were concerned about backlash, anti-war sentiment from the public. So we engaged quietly on this issue. One of our projects was to host a visit of Afghani journalists to Paris to meet directly with French centers of influence. We also invited a delegation of 10 newly-elected Afghani women parliamentarians for training in France.

But the project closest to my heart was our work with underprivileged youth. A third of France's citizens were under the age of 25, and France had the largest Muslim population

in Europe at the time. We prioritized reaching out to the next diverse generation, young people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds in underserved communities. The devoted work of Cultural Affairs Officer Lora Berg and local staff member Randiane Peccoud in particular led to stellar results.

We started the "Youth Ambassadors Exchange" for high school students. This program was specifically for students from underprivileged neighborhoods, giving kids with good grades but limited opportunities the possibility of going to the United States. We pulled together and supported affiliate networks, one for young elected officials and another for young entrepreneurs.

We sent eight Muslim French rappers and two young bloggers to the Harlem Biennale; it resulted in outstanding coverage in the media in France. These rappers were deeply impressed - one of them was quoted in the press as saying "the U.S. President represents hope."

On September 23, 2010, the *New York Times* published a long article about the success of the U.S. Embassy in France, and specifically public diplomacy, in working with disadvantaged neighborhoods. They wrote about our reaching out to the banlieux, home of so many disaffected youth. The article said "anti-American sentiment, once pervasive in these neighborhoods, seems to have been all but erased." After this *New York Times* article came out, Secretary Clinton sent the embassy a letter of congratulations on our work.

Q: Well, you had a lot of unusual exchange programs. What about the traditional ones like Fulbright? Did that go well?

BAROODY: Yes. One of the best things I did was to recruit the wife of Ambassador Rivkin, Susan Tolson, to serve with me on the Fulbright Board. She's a gifted business executive who relished the challenge. As chairman of the board, I worked with the Fulbright Commission that first year to get through an inspection mandated by the Government of France, which contributed an equal amount to the scholarship program. It was a big operation - $4 million a year, 218 traditional scholarships and 18 other exchange programs – and the inspection took three months. The inspectors concluded that Fulbright in France was well-managed and the French continued to contribute on a fifty-fifty basis.

Q: Did your doctorate come in handy with the Fulbrighters?

BAROODY: Any time you're in an academic setting, having an advanced degree is an advantage. What I learned in the PhD program also came in handy. I worked with my staff on a long-term statistical research project to determine how the French public perceived and reacted to Ambassador Rivkin's actions and words. We determined that whenever he met with regional media, he got constructive coverage, and subsequent coverage in those media grew increasingly positive. With that information, we persuaded

the ambassador to build a media component into every official trip he took outside of Paris.

Q: Isn't giving interviews considered old-school diplomacy these days? How about more cutting-edge work? In a place as sophisticated as Paris, you have to stay ahead of the curve.

BARODY: We focused on emerging communications technology. A priority was to get onto social media. It was new at that time - this is 2009, 2010 - and the social media tools available were becoming more advanced.

The cutting-edge was Facebook. Flickr was new; Twitter was new. The State Department Public Affairs folks, to their credit, understood that if you're going to talk to people, particularly young people, you've got to talk to them in their own language in the medium that they use. If what they listen to is Twitter, then you need to tweet.

The U.S. Embassy in Paris was a pioneer in this area. We got video flip cameras and sent them to our six field posts and said "send in stuff we can put on YouTube. We need material to put on Facebook." We carved out part of our office space at the Embassy to create a recording studio so that we could conduct interviews with Embassy officers and put them on our YouTube and Facebook sites.

Our Assistant Information Officer, Liz Detmeister, was adept with the new technology, and people from other parts of the embassy, such as Henry Haggard from the political section, chimed in with ideas on how to increase readership. The two audio-visual specialists on the public diplomacy staff were gifted and enthusiastic. We sent them for training in Vienna and London, and capitalized on what they learned to create our in-house video recording studio.

When we started developing the embassy's Facebook presence, Ambassador Rivkin, who understood the importance of social media, challenged us to attract 5000 "friends" by the end of the year. We delivered 15,000, more than any other embassy in Europe. Our YouTube channel registered over 13,000 uploads and we were selected to pilot a new media application called Parature. We were exploiting the new media to nurture a culture in which French youth were beginning to wear Obama tee-shirts.

Q: Did you make the news while you were in Paris?

BARODY: I did interviews and briefings, but the Press Section - Press Attaché Paul Patin and Liz Detmeister - carried the load on dealing with the media. I gave an interview on "The Tennis Channel" about an American donation of tennis equipment to a sports center in a poor neighborhood, which was ironic considering how well I swing a racquet. I also gave a speech at the French university Sciences Po, and went to schools in remote towns to meet with the kids and talk about the U.S. While on vacation, I taught a class at the Université de La Réunion, on the French island of La Réunion east of Madagascar in the Indian Ocean.

I did have one bizarre moment of fame on the Internet. As I mentioned, we hosted a big reception for the incoming ambassador. It was also a chance to introduce me and some new members of my staff. If you googled my name, one of the things that used to come up was that I had said in my speech, which was in "perfect French," that the United States welcomes cultural opportunities that bring the United States and France together. It was a mild thing to say; nothing newsworthy.

But somehow my statement got kludged together with a controversy going on at the time about the extradition of Roman Polanski to return to the United States and serve out his sentence for a 1977 conviction for having sex with an underage girl. Somehow my speech, which had absolutely nothing to do with Roman Polanski, was interpreted as a commentary on his extradition. For a while, if you looked under "Judith Baroody," there would be fifty entries about my speech at the reception and Roman Polanski.

A happier encounter with celebrity was meeting with Woody Allen. The Public Affairs Section had instituted summer internships for young minority film-makers with Disney and Sony studios and called it "the France-Los Angeles Media Exchange" or FLAME. Thanks to Ambassador Rivkin's Hollywood connections, we were able to organize programs with the head of Warner Brothers Entertainment, Barry Meyer, with Jodie Foster and with Woody Allen, who was in town filming "Midnight in Paris." They came to the Ambassador's Residence to give presentations about their work to a select group of minority film-makers.

Woody Allen is not everyone's cup of tea, but I'm a big fan and have been for decades. I was assigned to be the control officer for his program. Somehow word had gotten out that he was coming to the Residence and a crowd formed along the rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré in front of the security gates and stanchions. Everyone was watching for the limo. I saw an elderly man in a baseball cap with a middle-aged Asian lady across the street, shuffling down the sidewalk. They crossed the street and slipped through the crowd unnoticed. I recognized Woody Allen and his wife, and escorted them to the entrance of the Hôtel Pontalba while the crowd still awaited the limo.

I had lamented not having one of his books with me for him to sign, so my husband had gone out and found a single copy of his *Getting Even* at a bookstore near the embassy. When I had a chance to talk to Woody Allen alone before his presentation, I expressed my admiration for his brilliant work and said he was my hero. When I gave him *Getting Even*, he signed it "To Judy from your hero – Woody Allen."

Q: You indicated that your husband was present at a lot of these events. Did he have a job in Paris?

BAROODY: Once again, Dick was creative in finding employment while in France. His Washington office created a Memorandum of Agreement with the Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC) at the embassy for Dick to essentially telecommute. He served as the Armaments Cooperation Liaison officer for the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary

of the Army, handling the European, Middle East, and Africa portfolios. He even had an office there in the embassy.

A major portion of his work was to assist the ODC in Paris-based defense trade shows: the Paris Air Show and Eurosatory, the world's largest ground systems defense trade show. The Armed Forces Radio and Television Service interviewed Dick at the Paris Air Show, and he was responsible for strategic engagement by senior defense officials at these events. The State Department awarded Dick a Meritorious Honor Award for his contributions.

Oh, and in his spare time, he wrote his dissertation and defended it for a Ph.D. in Public Policy at George Mason University.

Senior Fellow, German Marshall Fund of the U.S. Think Tank, 2011-2012

Q: That's impressive!

BARODY: I'm very proud of my husband. After two years, we came home to the United States, having reached the pinnacle of what I consider success in public diplomacy, as PAO Paris. I would have liked to stay for the third year, but Dick's company lost the contract that allowed him to work in Paris. We had just spent a year apart when I was in Baghdad and we didn't want to go through that again.

Q: Were you sorry to leave France?

BARODY: Yes, but Paris was good to me. I got the promotion to Minister-Counselor, a Meritorious Honor Award, and enough soufflé to last a lifetime!

When we came back to Washington I wanted to do something challenging but different from public diplomacy. That's one of the great advantages of being in the Foreign Service. You have the same employer for decades, but you can take on so many different types of work. I became a Senior Fellow at the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF), which is a think-tank located near Dupont Circle.

Working at the German Marshall Fund was something I had not considered. Maryanne Thomas, Chief of the Career Development and Training Office, who was in charge of long-term training and detail tours for senior officers in Human Resources, raised it as a possibility. Maryanne was creative and warm-hearted; when she retired she was missed.

So I ended up going to the German Marshall Fund (GMF). This think tank was created to honor the fact that in 1947 Secretary of State George Marshall created the Marshall Plan that put Europe back on its feet. You remember that after World War II, the only intact economic infrastructure of countries involved in the conflict was the United States. Leaders in our government had the foresight to realize we needed to give support to our former enemies. It was courageous and ran contrary to the tradition of "to the victors go

the spoils." Look what that got us after World War I. We needed to get them back on track to rebuild their destroyed infrastructure and their economies.

It was one of the most visionary things any American leaders have ever done. Twenty-five years after the inception of the Marshall Plan, German Chancellor Brandt expressed his country's gratitude by an endowment on behalf of the German people to establish the German Marshall Fund of the U.S.

My assignment was to come up with ideas for a major conference and organize it, and to write analytical articles about foreign policy for publication. I also worked to bring GMF closer to the State Department by identifying people within the German Marshall Fund to serve as writers for State Department publications such the Washington file, and also as Targets of Opportunity for embassy speaking engagements.

The way that worked was, if I knew that a particular GMF scholar was traveling to a particular country, I would alert the Public Affairs Officer at the embassy there and let them know this expert was headed their way and provide contact information. "Target of Opportunity" is the golden word in public diplomacy. It means you're getting a speaker without having to pay travel costs. If they work for the U.S. government it's even better, because then you don't even have to pay an honorarium. It's a force multiplier for tight PD budgets.

I also set up meetings between State Department officials and German Marshall Fund experts. One was a meeting between a German Marshall Fund Middle East specialist and his counterpart at State on bringing together religious minorities from the Arabian Peninsula - from Bahrain, from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait - to talk about encouraging a more secular political narrative. I also gave presentations at the German Marshall Fund about the structure of the State Department and the role of public diplomacy.

The best part of the job was writing about international relations. I wrote an analysis about suffrage for Saudi women when Saudi leaders raised the possibility of women gaining the right to vote, concluding that Saudi Arabia wanted to be taken more seriously as part of the international community.

I wrote another study about European support for the Arab League in dealing with Syria. The idea was that Europe was trying to lead from behind by letting the Arab League take on a leadership role in the regional conflict. One of my favorite subjects is strategic geography - birth rates, death rates, terrain – the aspects that constitute the geographical makeup of a country and how they relate to political development, so I published an article about that.

Q: Where you able to travel for GMF?

BAROODY: I was encouraged and sponsored by GMF to go to the University of Southern California's (USC) Center on Public Diplomacy to reinforce the relationship between USC and GMF, because at the time USC had the only graduate program giving a

Master's Degree in Public Diplomacy. That was eye-opening; I had not been to USC before. I had a chance to teach a couple of classes and to get to know the scholars there. I also took part in a conference on Cultural Diplomacy run by the Ditchley Foundation in England, near Oxford. I gave a talk and met with fellow participants from 14 other countries.

When I was putting together my itinerary to go to the Ditchley conference, I told my GMF supervisor I wanted to follow up on a previous study I had written about Northern Ireland. GMF agreed to fund the additional travel. I traveled by bus, train and automobile from England to Scotland, got the lay of the land in Edinburgh and then took a car-bus ferry to Northern Ireland to research the status of the relationship between the Catholic and the Protestant communities there.

I concluded that the relationship was less stable than was being depicted in the United States. The media reflected an optimistic view about the Good Friday Agreements and how the peace settlement was holding up, but what I observed first-hand was increased dissension and separation between the communities.

One of my work requirements at GMF was to organize a conference, and I chose to focus on "Diplomacy and Communication: the Transatlantic Perspective." USC agreed to co-sponsor it. We explored how governments communicate directly with foreign publics to promote policy and understanding of their national interests. Participants included representatives from 23 Washington-based organizations, including senior staffers from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and representatives from six embassies.

Board of Examiners Assessor, 2012-2013

Q: OK, so today is June 9, and at this point you moved from GMF to the Board of Examiners. What did you think about the way State tests for new officers?

BARODY: I'll keep this brief because you have to be careful about not giving away information about the content of the test, testing procedures, or anything that might give anyone an unfair advantage. Recruiters are authorized to talk about the Foreign Service Officer Entrance Exam and to help candidates prepare for it, so I'll leave that in their good hands.

Let me just say that I was impressed by the extent to which the State Department works to make the process as fair as possible. The test is changed constantly with the help of academic experts, industrial psychologists on contract from throughout the United States, and designed so that no one tester can determine if a particular candidate passes or not. Some aspects of the testing process are determined randomly by a computer algorithm to ensure that no one has an unfair advantage.

Q: What were the best and worst parts of the job?

BAROODY: Let me start with what I liked least: the regimented nature of the work. Testers are on a strict schedule, just like those taking the test. You have to be at work at precisely 8:00, or 7:00 if you're a group leader. The only way I could guarantee getting there on time, given Washington traffic, was to take the train. You have to eat your lunch while scoring exams on testing days. The upside was that you don't test every day. Examiners are given different assignments to add some variety to the workday.

Q: What about having to tell candidates that they didn't pass?

BAROODY: That can be painful. Some people have spent a lot of capital to get to the testing site, flying hundreds of miles at their own expense, and invest emotional capital as well. Some cry when you tell them they didn't pass. You can be sympathetic, but as a tester you just have to deal with it. What bothered me more were the cases, and fortunately there were only a few, when I strongly felt the candidate should have passed the exam and would have been an asset to the Foreign Service but other testers disagreed. I just hope they tried again.

The best part was going off-site to administer the test in other parts of the country. The purpose was to increase geographic and ethnic diversity of the Foreign Service by making it easier for candidates beyond the East Coast to take the oral exam. We had a two-week session in San Antonio that coincided with celebrations of the anniversary of the Alamo. I enjoyed it so much I returned a few years later with my husband on vacation. The BEX testing team was also in San Francisco when the Giants won the World Series – talk about great timing! These off-sites were a bonding experience for the testers who have to collaborate when it comes to grading candidates, and they helped us bring new officers from the Western U.S. and Southwest into the service who might not otherwise have entered.

Even within the constraints of administering standardized testing, there was some room for creativity. As a special project, I led a team to create on-line training to teach Foreign Service Specialists overseas how to evaluate applications for Specialist jobs. We needed Specialists to help determine which applications should be advanced to the next step – an invitation to come in and be tested – but most Specialists are overseas by nature of their work. So I created an on-line tutorial using the BEX team as "actors," with video links and a follow-up quiz to solve the problem.

Foreign Policy Advisor, Defense Logistics Agency, 2013-2015

Q: You were at the Board of Examiners only a year, right?

BAROODY: That's right. My next job, which was quite different, was to be the Political Advisor (POLAD) to the Defense Logistics Agency. Sometimes you bid on future assignments on a whim, and this was one of these times. I was looking at the bid list, at jobs at the senior level, searching for work that would be intellectually challenging and completely different. I saw the job opening at DLA and thought, "This could be cool."

So I did my due diligence as a bidder. I called the incumbent and said I was interested in the job and wanted to know more about it. I told him I hadn't done this kind of work before, but I did have a degree from the National War College and taught there, and served a tour in Iraq. He said “All right, sure, come on over.”

I found the Defense Logistics Agency near Ft. Belvoir and made my way through security to his office using my spouse military ID. There was no one to show me the way so I asked the guards how to find the Director’s Suite. Then this woman comes rushing in and she's mortified, saying, “I was supposed to meet you!” The poor lady had been waiting for half an hour to meet me at the door, greet me and escort me to the Director’s office. She became a dear friend, Jean Ellis, outstanding even among DLA’s great staff.

From that moment on, I realized that if you work in a military environment and your rank gives you a particular status - I was a two-star General equivalent as a Minister Counselor – your colleagues are aware of your rank and treat you accordingly. I was always treated with respect. The folks in Human Resources gave me a pin indicating I was in the Senior Executive Service. I wore it a couple of times, then thought, “Well, that's not right. I'm not in the Senior Executive Service. I'm a proud member of the Senior *Foreign* Service.” But everybody seemed to know that by my second day on the job.

I thought my visit to DLA was for an informational interview, but they hired me on the spot. Once I started at DLA, I was included in the Directors morning staff meeting, a select group. The director was a three-star Admiral, Mark Harnitchek, one of the best bosses I've ever had. He was forceful, focused and scared some people. Let’s just say he didn’t suffer fools lightly. He always treated me with respect and listened to what I had to say.

But Admiral Harnitchek was a remarkable leader because he laid out precisely what he wanted to accomplish. There were six things he wanted to accomplish that year, and much of what this enormous agency did was geared toward achieving those goals. They were not modest: “We want to save the Government of the United States five billion dollars this year.” Employees knew what they were expected to do.

His vision was clearly articulated and his objectives were consistent. It's an enormous agency: 27,000 employees and an annual budget of 42 billion dollars, the biggest agency you've never heard of. DLA provides worldwide logistics to support the military as well as some embassies in war zones. About half of that budget went for fuel: you can't fly planes, drive tanks or pilot ships and subs without it.

It was a positive place to work; colleagues were friendly and dedicated. It's one of those places where people start in an entry-level job and continue to work there their entire professional lives, rising to greater positions of authority. You don't see it much in industry anymore, where people start as a stockroom clerk and rise to section head, step by step up the GS ladder, but that still happens at DLA.

DLA staff had a powerful sense of mission and worked together seamlessly, at least at headquarters. They know that if they don't do their job, soldiers might die, sailors might go hungry, planes might not take off. If you don't work as a team, the logistics chain will not flow.

Q: What kind of work did you do for them?

BAROODY: My job was to act as the liaison between the State Department and DLA. It was a vital link at that time, and this was 2013-2015, because of the mission to get provisions and cargo *into* Afghanistan and draw down other supplies, weaponry and forces *from* Afghanistan. My job was to engage with the State Department on that issue and to coordinate with the embassies whose countries were along the supply line.

I was at DLA a week and the director told me to prepare to leave for Azerbaijan. I said, "Yes, sir." A week later I was on a plane to Baku. The objective was to talk to our international partners along the logistical route into Afghanistan about providing supplies and to meet with officers at the U.S. embassies.

A lot of goods went from the United States through these different countries, but in addition a lot of food was bought locally in these countries and sent to our bases. The local suppliers were geographically closer to the end point, so you could get fresher milk, meat and produce to the consumers along what was called the "Northern Distribution Network."

These countries were Latvia, Lithuania, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. I went to each of those countries with DLA delegations, except for Russia. We got a remarkable level of cooperation from these partners.

The small contingent I was traveling with to Baku concluded that the cargo handlers there were up to the job of moving the supply chain along, meeting all the technical requirements. Of course, no matter how strong a supply chain is technically, if a government is not amenable, they can create all kinds of obstacles. We met with the Deputy Chief of Mission, Derek Hogan, to get a sense of the political complexities of the bilateral relationship. These consultations provided the information I needed to advise DLA's leadership about the sensitivities of working with the government of Azerbaijan, which were substantial.

Q: One of the things that was never publicized was that, back in the 1960s, that in Yugoslavia, a Communist country, we had a veterinarian unit which inspected beef which was feeding our troops in NATO.

BAROODY: There are still veterinarian units in the logistics chain working on food inspection, a critical factor for food safety. When you think about it, if you buy something like ham or bacon and you're trying to get it to our troops in Afghanistan where local vendors do not sell pork, it's imperative that we get it to them fresh, on time,

and still cold. Otherwise, our soldiers could come down with trichinosis, salmonella and other types of food poisoning.

It's the challenge of cold chain management that I found particularly noteworthy. People get graduate degrees in this subject – I didn't realize that. It goes to show that you're exposed to so many different interesting lives and careers when you're in the Foreign Service.

Another thing Admiral Harnitchek instructed me to do was to meet with the Washington-based ambassadors of all of the countries along the Northern Distribution Network. I went from embassy to embassy for every one of these countries and met with the ambassadors and their staffs.

So when the president of Latvia came to Washington, the folks at the Embassy of Latvia already knew me, and they invited me and the director to a private dinner to meet with the president and his wife. I prepared talking points for my boss. Sometimes military officers are not as affable and glib as those of us in the Foreign Service. You get a bunch of public diplomacy officers into a room and you can't shut us up. We're hardwired for exchanging information, carrying on conversations.

So although I have been trained, when I am with my superiors, to hold my tongue – truly, the best practice - in this case we were all sitting around the dinner table without a word. We could hear forks tinkling on plates and people sipping from cups and nobody was making a peep and I thought, "I've got to do something about this."

So I disregarded protocol. I knew that the president's wife was an artist, and I asked about her work. That broke the ice and the principal officers started talking to each other. Jump-starting a conversation is a skill, but it must be done with delicacy. For every small victory like this, there have been many more times I wish I had kept my mouth shut.

As part of my work at DLA, I also had a chance to talk to vendors in the countries along the distribution network who were supplying our troops. We encouraged local vendors to prepare for the end of U.S. military demand for their products and seek U.S. commercial customers in the open market. When the U.S. military buys anything it's on a giant scale. If you're in a small country like Lithuania, Latvia or Georgia and you get this order for a massive amount of milk or honey or fresh vegetables, you ramp up your industry or production in that area and after a while you come to depend on that foreign source of income.

Then, when the U.S. begins to withdraw, we don't need that much milk; we don't need that much honey. The adjustment can be a real hardship for small economies. So one of my jobs was to talk to the vendors to encourage them to lower their dependence on U.S. military purchases and talk instead to Foreign Commercial Officers about exporting their goods to the U.S.

Once I was in my office at DLA and got a call from the State Department saying the U.S. Embassy in Kabul was getting low on fresh meat and the Ambassador was about to raise the alarm at very high levels. A train carrying food for the embassy had been held up at a border. I picked up the phone, made a couple of calls, and DLA had planes full of provisions in the air within two hours. That's how they worked.

I began to see supply chains differently. Like, when you're out late at night and you see the Walmart truck barreling down the interstate, you know that they're taking supplies from this warehouse to that store in Cincinnati or Bloomington or wherever it might be. You begin to understand the significance and complexity of the logistical chain.

Q: To me the incredible thing is the stocking of supermarkets.

BAROODY: Exactly. There are so many aspects of daily life like that you just don't think about, but you'd certainly notice it if it stopped.

I also had a chance when I was at DLA to go to the Air War College in Montgomery and give some lectures and seminars. They have a State Department-DoD exchange. So serving at DLA offered a lot of advantages. For one thing, it allowed me to try a new cone, Political-Military. The fact that the State Department is flexible enough to allow a Public Diplomacy officer to be a Political Military officer says something about the strength of the institution.

The other thing I wanted to mention was DLA's response to the outbreak of Ebola in West Africa. There was a vicious epidemic, the most widespread outbreak in history, and more than 11,000 people died. The United States was primarily supporting the population in Liberia; other countries and international organizations focused on Guinea and Sierra Leone.

As soon as President Obama said the U.S. was going to help with the outbreak, Admiral Harnitchek commissioned a ship and DLA started loading up supplies that were warehoused in Europe to send to West Africa, such as tents and water - you might be surprised how important it is to have clean water in a crisis – as well as food, building materials and medical supplies. DLA's response to Liberia's Ebola crisis was massive, immediate, and discreet. You never heard anyone saying what a great job they did, but no doubt many are alive today because of DLA's rapid response.

In the second year of my tenure at DLA, we got a new director, Air Force Lieutenant General Andrew Busch. One of the last things I did at DLA was to set up a luncheon at the State Department for the new director with top State officials, including Under Secretary Patrick Kennedy, to talk about increasing cooperation between DLA and the State Department on supplying embassies worldwide.

Executive Director, Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, 2015-2017

Q: So from that globe-trotting experience to our humble little cottage here at ADST. How did you like your work here?

BAROODY: Indeed, my last job was here at the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training. What a way to go! My job was to maintain the ADST website and supervise the interns, about 20 interns physically present at the cottage and twelve virtual interns throughout the U.S. per year. I recruited, selected and trained them. Directing the intern program was the most enjoyable part of the job, getting to know smart, ambitious young people on the cusp of entering the professional world and starting their adult lives. I've maintained friendships with several and continue to send letters of recommendation on their behalf.

The interns' job was to learn about the work of the Foreign Service. We provided field trips to the State Department. I gave briefings on the structure and organization of the Department and the roles of each of the career tracks. The Foreign Service Institute allowed the interns to audit some classes and gave them a tour of the consular training facility, with its mock visa window and jail cell.

Another way they learned about diplomacy was by reading through the oral histories, selecting excerpts and molding them into accounts which we called "Moments in U.S. Diplomatic History." The Moments were shorter and easier to read than oral histories, designed to highlight a significant episode of history or a turning point in diplomatic relations.

At the time of my tenure at ADST, we had about 2,500 oral histories, over 600 "Moments in U.S. Diplomatic History" and a growing collection of podcasts based on the oral history recordings. I know from having spoken at universities about the work of ADST that scholars are using our primary source materials for research. This is gratifying, because the mission of ADST is to capture these histories so people can hear about U.S. diplomacy in Foreign Service Officers' own words and so that FSOs just starting their careers might learn from the past.

I should note that, as much as I appreciated working with the young interns, I also enjoyed the chance to see old friends such as Skip Gnehm, Betsy Whitaker and Richard Boucher as they came in to be interviewed for their oral histories. We're all entering this unexplored new phase of our lives at the same time.

Q: Anything you'd like to add before we wrap this up?

Words of Advice to New Foreign Service Officers

BAROODY: Thanks for the opportunity! After 33 years in the Foreign Service, I do have some observations to share. I've spent a good part of my career as a mentor and I'd like to take this opportunity for one more shot at mentoring.

One word of advice is: don't underestimate the role of luck, because luck has so much to do with success. There are a lot of things in the Foreign Service, as in life, that you have little control over. The first one is getting into the Foreign Service to begin with, because passing the Foreign Service exam and getting off the register and onto the payroll is a challenge on the order of being accepted into an Ivy League university.

Having been on the Board of Examiners, I'm convinced the test is engineered in a way that reduces the element of chance by not allowing one tester to have an undue influence. But luck plays a role in how a candidate performs on the day of the test – if they're feeling rested and confident or frazzled and tongue-tied, or if other candidates bring down the performance of the entire group.

Luck may steer the course of your career in unexpected ways. When I entered the Foreign Service on June 10, 1984 and was sworn in by USIA Director Charles Z. Wick, I was told: "Barring an act of Congress, you will retire as a Foreign Service Officer with the United States Information Agency."

Well, sure enough, halfway through my career Congress acted to abolish USIA and rolled it into the State Department. The demoralized catchphrase at the time of "consolidation" was "resistance is futile," as the Borg said in "Star Trek: First Contact." A number of talented and experienced public diplomacy officers quit or retired because they didn't want to have to make that transition. It was halfway through my career – 16 years in. I decided to stay in the Service and to adapt.

As a result, I've had chances to work in areas that were challenging, in the Rule of Law office in Baghdad, as a Political Military officer at DLA. I would never have had those options if USIA had not merged with State.

Q: I have to say this. I've interviewed hundreds of public diplomacy USIA officers as part of the oral history program. USIA officers, I think, have a broader experience in that particular field, which makes them more adaptable to move over into other fields.

BAROODY: Consolidation has been positive on the macro level and I've developed a greater appreciation for the work of FSOs in other tracks. The work of the State Department is vital to our national security and the dedication you see within the ranks is remarkable, whether it's in public diplomacy, economics, consular, political, or management.

The unsung sacrifices of State Department Officers around the world, in places that don't rise high on the radar - Burundi, Sudan, Yemen - and those that do, such as Afghanistan and Iraq – these sacrifices are made day by day. The walls of the C Street lobby are lined with the names of Foreign Service Officers who died in the line of duty. Others live in unhealthy or dangerous conditions, away from family and the comforts of an American home.

If I had known at the beginning that I was going to end up at the State Department I might have altered my career track. At USIA, the highest goal was to become a Public Affairs Officer, the chief of the PAO section at an embassy. That was what you aspired to, and some public diplomacy officers went through their entire careers without ever achieving that goal.

At the beginning of my career, I wouldn't have had the audacity to aspire to be the Minister Counselor for Public Affairs in Paris, yet that's where I ended up. I would not have dreamed of being the Director of Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy for the Near East Bureau, the first woman ever to have that job, yet there I was. But if I had started out at the State Department and not at USIA, and if I had aspired to become an ambassador, I would have plotted a different career trajectory. I would have done the things that you need to do to rise through the ranks, such as working in the Executive Secretariat. I would have looked for a mentor who could help me move up and taken the jobs that give you the experience you need to lead an embassy.

At the beginning, it's good to set a goal and have a vision of where you want to go in your career. When you're a new officer, it's hard to envision your future. These days the State Department requires that you pick your track even before you take the Foreign Service exam, so you have to do a fair amount of research and figure out which track you want. It's not easy to change tracks once you get into the service. Once you decide what track you want to follow, also consider where you want to end up professionally and geographically.

I'd recommend keeping careful notes, not only for the oral history which you should do when you retire, but for your own employee evaluation reports (EERs). I used to joke that I took my EER more seriously than at any other document I wrote in a given year. You have to be serious about your EER if you want to be promoted, get good jobs in the future or win awards. Keeping track of what you accomplish day to day is a habit you should get into early in your career.

It's even more useful to keep notes if things don't go so well and you get a bad evaluation. Don't hesitate to grieve a bad EER if it is unfair. Contact the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA) for help. I had a situation early in my career in which my supervisor gave me an evaluation that looked positive on the surface but contained harmful "code words." When I came back to Washington, a friend looked at my EER and said, "You'll never get promoted with this." I contacted AFSA and met with an experienced counselor who helped me move that evaluation through the grievance process. If I hadn't taken action, my career in the Foreign Service might have ended right there.

The social aspect of Foreign Service work is also important, particularly in public diplomacy. You need to be able to conduct a conversation with give-and-take in a way that puts people at ease. Your job is to get out there and listen, promote U.S. policy and help others understand the values and political dynamics of the United States. I had a colleague who didn't get tenure, a great linguist and a smart guy. He told me, "I didn't like the parties."

You have to be adaptable. FSOs know from the beginning that they must be available to serve world-wide. Your career may take you down an unexpected path. I met my husband at the Foreign Service Institute and didn't plan for my career to go the way it did. I was planning to be an "Arabist" and spend my career in the Arabic-speaking countries of the Middle East. Deciding to marry a man who was being posted to Israel altered my trajectory. Israel turned out to be a great post, and having worked at a large embassy full of talented officers early on helped me throughout my career. I learned by observing them, being their friend, and following them in their careers.

When we returned from Israel to Washington, I took a step back. I took leave without pay to get my PhD. Some people would say that that was a crazy thing to do, but I was unhappy about being separated from my husband, who was in South Carolina with the Air Force. My way of coping was to enter a doctoral program. USIA allowed me to take the time off because my degree in International Relations would be related to the work we do. It was a sacrifice financially, but having the advanced degree has helped me throughout my career. I would advise prospective officers that it's beneficial to have a graduate degree.

Another lesson learned was to trust and respect local staff members, the Foreign Service National staff overseas. For the most part, they have been a treasure for the United States, dedicated to promoting better relations between their own country and the U.S. I have worked with some outstanding Foreign Service Nationals. Some who jump to mind immediately are Ofra Yogev and Matty Stern in Israel, Boubker Mazoz and Abdelkrim Radadi in Morocco, Christina Hadjiparaskeva and Ipek Uzunoglu in Cyprus, Monica Alcalde and Dinah Lee Arnett in Chile, and Marie-Chantal Prepont and Veronique Bornet in France.

Don't be shy about lobbying for jobs. This is hardwired into the culture of the State Department. It was less so in USIA but it was something I had to learn. You have to be savvy about creating a professional network. Fortunately I have the world's greatest mentor, my husband Dick Krueger. He's always been my chief career adviser. He's the one who said, "Get yourself out there. Award yourself. Make it as easy as possible for other people to give you awards or do you favors." I also followed the advice of close friends such as Louise Pfender Taylor and Susan Clyde.

The State Department offers long-term training details, to other agencies and to think tanks. You can compete for a Master's program at Princeton or a year at The National Defense University. If you start feeling burned out, if you have been in high-stress post - whether it's in a war zone or because of a toxic boss - it's not a bad idea to take a sabbatical and to get some breathing space, regroup.

Understand the importance of treating other people with respect and kindness. I have known officers who did not deal well with others and rose to the top ranks, but the most admirable officers have been ethical and generous in helping colleagues. The first person who comes to mind is Thomas Pickering, our ambassador in Tel Aviv. He demanded the

best from all members of the embassy staff but was respectful of others, professionally generous with mentoring and promoting the careers of his staffers, and was arguably the most venerated officer of his generation.

Always say “thank you.” President George H.W. Bush was famous for writing handwritten thank-you notes, and he did that all throughout his career. People remember. When I get a thank-you note from one of my colleagues or mentees, I keep it for years. So I make it a point to say “thank you” in writing, whether it's an email or a handwritten note.

Say “good morning” when you first walk into your office. There are people who don't acknowledge their staffs or co-workers; they sail into their offices oblivious. But it makes a difference, in some cultures more than others. Say “congratulations” when people get promoted or get awards. They remember. Don't lose your temper at work. People regret losing their cool. I can remember five times in my career - and that goes back before the Foreign Service, when I was a reporter - where I have lost my temper at work and criticized somebody in public, and I regret it. Praise in public, criticize in private.

Think about your life outside the embassy or the State Department. At every overseas post I had a different hobby. In Syria it was visiting archaeological sites, many of which have since been destroyed. In Israel, it was horseback riding and involvement with my church. In Morocco, I wrote restaurant reviews and articles about Casablanca history. In Cyprus, we raised rabbits and I converted my dissertation into a textbook. In Chile, we explored vineyards. In Iraq, I played guitar and sang with the “Baghdad String Benders.” In Paris, we walked our standard poodles through the Bois de Boulogne.

Think about the needs of the service, I didn't want to go to Iraq, to be in the middle of a war zone. But if you are working in the Foreign Service, you are serving the people of the United States and that can mean you have to go somewhere you don't want to go and be separated for some period of time from your family.

Now, at the end of my career, I can say that having been in the Foreign Service allowed me to achieve my life goals of seeing the world, learning about other cultures, enjoying a happy personal life, gaining financial security and providing purposeful service to my country.

I have been lucky and I am grateful. I hope everyone who reads or hears this oral history will be equally lucky, and, at the end of their careers, equally grateful.

Q: This has been a pleasure. Thank you.

End of interview